

**THE FEMALE DRAMATIC DEDICATION IN THE  
RESTORATION PERIOD**

**(1660-1714)**

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## 1. Introduction

### 1. 1 Restoration drama, actresses, female playwrights and patronesses

The Restoration can be considered as a pivotal period in the history of English drama, especially as regards the role of women. After an eighteen-year hiatus as a result of the Puritan rule of the Interregnum, soon after the reopening of the theatres in London in 1660 women were involved in the theatre as actresses, playwrights, spectators and patrons. For the first time in the history of England, women were allowed to perform professionally.<sup>1</sup> The patents granted to Killigrew and Davenant specified that women had to be part of the companies and not only occasionally employed for a particular production. From then on, they enjoyed the privilege of being recognised as His Majesty's Servants.<sup>2</sup>

The Restoration was also the period when female playwrights first entered the professional sphere. Margaret Cavendish, duchess of Newcastle, published a volume of *Playes* in 1662 and yet another in 1668.<sup>3</sup> Her works were more argumentative than

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<sup>1</sup> According to Elizabeth Howe, the exact date is assumed to be 8 December 1660, when an actress played Desdemona in a production of *Othello* by the King's Company (19). The evidence is a prologue by Thomas Jordan included in *A Royal Arbour of Loyal Poesie* (1664): "A Prologue, to introduce the first Woman that came to act on the Stage, in the tragedy called The Moor of Venice." According to Wilson, Jordan was closely associated with the Red Bull company and he may have written the prologue for this troupe after it became the King's Company (*All the King's Ladies* 5). The first woman to perform on the English stage was probably Mrs. Katherine Corey, who claimed on 11 March 1689 that "she was the first and is the last of all the Actresses that were constituted by King Charles the Second" (Milhous and Hume, *A Register* 272).

<sup>2</sup> The King's warrant to the patentees (dated August 21, 1660) ordered that thenceforth only women should play women's parts, so that plays might be "esteemed not only harmless delights but useful and instructive representations of human life" (Hotson pp. 197-218, Nicoll pp. 70-71). 94). However, women were by no means equal to men: their status was significantly lower than their male counterparts, they were paid less and none of them became a theatre manager or a playwright.

<sup>3</sup> Margaret Cavendish had a reputation for being eccentric. Pepys recorded a several anecdotes in his *Diary*, for instance the staging of a play by the duke, which Pepys attributes to the duchess, on 11 April 1667: "The whole story of this Lady is a romance, and all she do is romantick. Her footmen in velvet coats, and herself in an antique dress, as they say; and was the other day at her own play, *The Humourous Lovers*; the most ridiculous thing that ever was wrote, but yet she and her Lord mightily pleased with it; and she, at the end, made her respects to the players from her box, and did give them thanks. There is as much expectation of her coming to Court, that so [many] people may come to see her, as if it were the Queen of Sheba" (8: 163-164).

dramatic and were not intended to be performed. However, from the early 1660s a number of plays written by women began to find their way to the stage.

In February 1663, Katherine Philips's translation of Corneille's *La mort de Pompée* was produced at the Theatre Royal in Dublin and printed in London that same year (Chernaik).<sup>4</sup> The tragedy seems to have produced in London too, in 1667, followed by her translation of *Horace* (completed by Sir John Denham) in 1669 (Chernaik). Also in 1669 we find the first original play written by a woman and intended for performance: Frances Boothby's tragicomedy *Marcellia*, which was staged at Drury Lane by the King's Company probably in August and was licensed for publishing on 9 October (Van Lennep 163). About this time, Elizabeth Polwhele wrote two works which seem to have been professionally staged too: the manuscript of her tragedy *The Faithfull Virgins*, preserved at the Bodleian Library, Oxford, contains a permit to be acted by the Duke's Company signed the Master of the Revels, whereas her comedy *The Frolicks*, written in the early 1670s was probably performed by the King's Company.<sup>5</sup> The 1670s brought the first woman playwright who made an income writing for the stage: Aphra Behn, who authored a total of nineteen plays. Then in the 1690s came the first wave of professional female playwrights: Susanna Centlivre, Delarivier Manley, Catharine Trotter, Mary Pix, the young lady "Ariadne," author of *She Ventures and He Wins* (1695). All these female dramatists were issued from the middle class, given that women risked their reputation in writing professionally for the stage. They benefitted from the competition between the two playhouses and their need for new plays.

Since the introduction of actresses and the emergence of professional female playwrights are certainly the most significant contributions of women to Restoration theatre, these two aspects have been largely studied. The first scholar to approach one of the roles played by women was John Harold Wilson, who examined the living

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<sup>4</sup> The edition included the prefatorial text "the printer to the reader," in which Philips explains that "*Pompey* being a Translation out of the French of Monsieur *Corneille*, the hand that did it is responsible for nothing but the English" and also that she did not intend to have it staged, but "those that could not be resisted were resolved to have it acted" (A2).

<sup>5</sup> There has been some disagreeing regarding the composition of the play: Montague Summers dated the play between 1661-1663 (*Playhouse of Pepys* 338-339), whereas Hume and Milhous argued that it was probably written in 1670, for the manuscript is dated 1671 (40-41).

conditions of women as professional players and the impact of their introduction on Restoration drama in *All the King's Ladies* (1958). Wilson argued that Killigrew and Davenant might have been concerned about audience response, for the ladies, particularly, might be shocked (6). However, the circumstances were propitious: the exiled court and part of the gentry had seen actresses in France, they might also have attended one of the performances by the French troupes in London before the Civil War and perhaps they even saw masques at the Jacobean Court where women were allowed to act. Wilson suggests that the very first English actresses might have come from dancing and singing schools or perhaps they were recommended by musicians, choir masters, dancing masters and actors (8).<sup>6</sup> After the first years, places on the stage became highly prized and therefore women needed the recommendation of patrons (14).

Wilson underlined the influence of actresses, pointing out that these women “brought to the theatre a new dimension in sex” (67). Restoration drama provided actresses with the opportunity to display their bodies and charms. Many male playgoers came to admire the women rather than the plays and dramatists soon responded to the audience reaction and took advantage of it. Women began to be cast in leading roles which required cross-dressing, as a means to have them in breeches (81). The popularity reached by the actresses is shown by the large number of prologues and epilogues written for them. Regarding the adaptations of pre-Restoration plays, Wilson demonstrates that authors added new roles for women or heightened and lengthened the existing ones (101). Wilson’s monograph on the English actresses thus showed the importance of their introduction for Restoration drama and paved the way for other studies on women and theatre.

The way in which the appearance of the actress helped shape Restoration drama was also analysed by Elizabeth Howe in *The First English Actresses* (1992). She discussed, for instance, the centrality of Elizabeth Barry to the development of the genre of the she-tragedy or the use of prologues and epilogues to build new links

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<sup>6</sup> Perhaps they came such schools as that at Chelsea where Mrs. Pepys’s maid, Mary Ashwell, once acted in a masque (Pepys, February 26, April 26, 1663).

between spectators and female players.<sup>7</sup> More recently, Gilli Bush-Bailey has examined female agency in Restoration drama from a new perspective in *Treading the Bawds: Actresses and Playwrights on the Late-Stuart Stage* (2006). Adopting a feminist stance, Bush-Bailey emphasised the collaboration between actresses and female playwrights, and highlighted also the role of women in theatre management, especially Elizabeth Barry and Anne Bracegirdle at the actor's company in Lincoln's Inn Fields.

The impact of the female playwright has also been the subject of critical attention and the study of their work has burgeoned in recent years. This, however, was a slow process. Except for the pioneering edition of *The Works of Aphra Behn* (1915) by Montague Summers, almost no plays by women authors were available to the public until the 1980s.<sup>8</sup> Critical interest was sparked by Fidelis Morgan's anthology *The Female Wits* (1981)—significantly published by Virago Press—which included works by Behn, Trotter, Manley and Centlivre. This was followed by a facsimile edition of Pix's and Trotter's plays edited by Edna L. Steeves (1982), which included an introduction. Fidelis Morgan and Patrick Lyons contributed to the popularization of the drama written by women putting together the collection *Female Playwrights of the Restoration: Five Comedies* (1991) for Dent's Everyman series.<sup>9</sup> In the 1990s and the turn of the century, critical editions of works by female authors started to pile up: Katherine Rogers's *The Meridian Anthology of Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Plays by Women* (1994), Janet Todd's critical edition of *The Works of Aphra Behn* (1996) in seven volumes, Melinda C. Finberg's *Eighteenth-Century Women Dramatists*

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<sup>7</sup> Diana Solomon has recently considered Restoration prologues and epilogues in *Prologues and Epilogues of Restoration Theater: Gender and Comedy, Performance and Print* (2013). She argued that their popularity coincided with the rise of the English actress. These paratexts provided the first sanctioned space for actresses to express ideas in public, communicate with other women and perform comedy.

<sup>8</sup> A signal exception was Judith Milhous and Robert D. Hume's critical edition of Polwhele's *The Frolicks* (1977).

<sup>9</sup> This included Behn's *The Feign'd Curtizans*, Ariadne's *She Ventures and He Wins*, Pix's *The Beau Defeated* and Centlivre's *The Basset Table* and *The Busybody*.

(2001),<sup>10</sup> and the facsimile edition of Trotter's and Pix's works edited by Anne Kelley in 2001.

In a parallel line to the recovery of the works of Restoration female dramatists, scholarship began to focus on different aspects related to authorship. In *The Prostituted Muse. Images of Women & Women Dramatists* (1988), Jacqueline Pearson considered women both as playwrights and as represented on stage. She exposed the contradictions female authors were subject to, for, while they argued for their ability and right to enter the literary sphere on the same terms as men, they absorbed their cultural misogyny and feel guilt or anxiety about their own claims.<sup>11</sup> The volume by Pilar Cuder-Domínguez, *Stuart Women Playwrights, 1613-1713* (2011), attempted to draw a panorama of how women writers appropriated the historically male-oriented genres of tragedy and tragicomedy and how constructions of gender determined the interests in power relations, political agency, heroism and morality present in these genres. Cuder-Domínguez argues that female playwrights were indebted to their Jacobean predecessors for models of femininity and female heroism. Moreover, she establishes a connection between the emergence of female dramatists and the decay of neoclassical ideals in late seventeenth and eighteenth-century tragedy in favour of the principles of pathos and emotion.

Although these scholarly investigations have expanded our knowledge of the many ways in which women participated in Restoration theatrical culture and have certainly reshaped our understanding of women's agency, a crucial area remains largely unexplored: their role as patrons of the stage. Only David Roberts, in *The Ladies: Female Patronage of Restoration Drama 1660-1700* (1989), has given this topic some serious consideration. It must be noted that Roberts used the term "patron" primarily in

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<sup>10</sup> Rogers edited Behn's *Sir Patient Fancy*, Pix's *The Spanish Wives* and Centlivre's *A Bold Stroke for a Wife*, together with other non-Restoration plays. Finger's volume included Pix's *The Innocent Mistress* and Centlivre's *The Busybody*, among others. Todd's edition of Behn was complemented with an edited collection of essays, *Aphra Behn Studies* (1996), and a biography, *The Secret Life of Aphra Behn* (1997).

<sup>11</sup> In the first part of the study, Pearson looks at the context of women writers, surveying contemporary views on women and the rise of the feminist opposition; the other capacities in which women worked in the theatre; the images of women and aspects of women's lives in the works of male playwrights; and female transvestites, which reveal the period's ideas on gender. In the second part, Pearson examines individual women playwrights, focusing on their themes, techniques and images of women and how these differ from those of their male colleagues.



its more general sense of client or spectator and examined female playgoing working on Samuel Pepys's descriptions of his wife Elizabeth's visits to the theatre. However, Roberts also touched on the patronage exercised by the Restoration queens and the occasional groups or factions of noblewomen, for the most part the maids of honour. Among the forms of support exercised by these ladies, Roberts listed commanding performances or engaging performers to give repetitions or rehearsals to members of the court, so that rumours were activated before the public opening. Arranging a good turnout at the author's benefit, as Frances Teresa Stuart, duchess of Richmond and Lennox, did for Lee's *Theodosius* or Louise de K rouaille, duchess of Portsmouth, for his *Sophonisba* was also an effective endorsement. This recourse, which had not been used in the previous decade, turned female patrons into "something of a financial asset" (116). Nonetheless, even if Roberts has provided valuable insight into the support which Restoration women offered, he did not attempt a systematic study and his data is vastly incomplete. Therefore, this thesis attempts to fill this void and shed light on female patronage in Restoration theatre by examining the full corpus of dedications addressed to women between 1660 and 1714. By looking at the way in which authors praised these ladies and expressed their gratitude for the support received, this work will attempt to measure their capacity to act as brokers of patronage.

## **1. 2 The corpus of female dramatic dedications**

The first phase of this research consisted in the compilation of the corpus of female dramatic dedications by revising the extant drama (including both acted and unacted plays) published during the period 1660-1714. This study is restricted to dedications appended to plays published after Charles II's formal restoration to the English throne in May 1660.<sup>12</sup> Excepted are new editions when new prefatorial material is added, as well as adaptations of plays either staged or printed prior to 1660 which represent significant alterations of original materials. This can be illustrated by Thomas Killigrew's *Comedies and Tragedies* (1664), which includes two tragicomedies first

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<sup>12</sup> It is sometimes difficult to ascertain whether plays were published before or after the king's arrival in England, so only those whose publication can be dated before have been intentionally excluded—for example, John Dancer's *Aminta*, printed in 1660 but entered in the Stationers' Register on 8 November 1659 (Eyre and Rivington 241).

printed in 1641, together with six plays published for the first time.<sup>13</sup> As regards the *terminus ad quem*, although Queen Anne passed away on 1 August 1714 and George I was proclaimed king that very same day, plays printed throughout the entire year have been considered. Given that the last new play was staged in late April and that the general time-lapse between performance and publication was ten days to three weeks, it seems safe to assume that the plays in question were most probably printed during the reign of Queen Anne.<sup>14</sup>

In order to compile the dedications, I needed first to elaborate the census of plays to be examined. I drew this primarily from the Harbage-Schoenbaum-Wagonheim's *Annals of English Drama, 975-1700* (1989) and Burling's *A Checklist of New Plays and Entertainments on the London Stage, 1700-1737* (1993). Concerning the items recorded in the first source, I chose to exclude the only royal entertainment and all civic pageants for the texts are primarily descriptive rather than dramatic. In fact, these pieces are not listed in the contemporary dramatic catalogues which I consulted, namely Langbaine's *An Account of the English Dramatic Poets* (1691), Langbaine-Gildon's *The Lives and Characters of the English Dramatic Poets* (1699) and Baker's *Biographia Dramatica* (1764).<sup>15</sup> A number of political dialogues printed in 1660 were also omitted since they represent dramatised ideological debates rather than theatrical pieces. Burling's *Checklist* did not pose this sort of complication, as it incorporates solely plays and entertainments whose newspaper advertisements specified or implied theatrical content.

In addition, collections of drama were included in the census and perused. For this purpose, I drew on the list of collected editions of plays provided by Kewes

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<sup>13</sup> *The Prisoners* and *Claricilla* were printed together in 1641, although each play has a separate title page, the first dated 1640. The other plays added in this folio collection are *The Princess*, *The Parsons Wedding*, *The Pilgrim*, *Cecilia and Clorinda* (in two parts), *Thomaso* (in two parts) and *Bellamira her Dream* (in two parts).

<sup>14</sup> Milhous and Hume have argued for this dating of the interval between performance and publication: until the mid-eighteenth century, new plays were usually staged every night until they turned unappealing, which in the best-case scenario was ten days and at the most two weeks; once the play was no longer on stage, the playwright sold the script to a bookseller (*Publication* 57).

<sup>15</sup> Only Baker mentions four civic pageants written by Thomas Jordan, although these are indicatively separated from the rest of his dramatic production (224).

(2004, Appendix B). Posthumous collections have only been considered when new matter (either preliminary or dramatic or both) was added, such as *The Works of Sir William Davenant* (1673), which contains five previously unedited plays, together with a dedication to the duke of York by the poet's widow, Lady Mary Davenant.<sup>16</sup> Nonce collections, such as Sir William Lower's *Three New Plays* (1661), reissues or reprints of anthologies were disregarded.<sup>17</sup> On the contrary, I covered plays appearing in nondramatic collections, like Katherine Philip's *Pompey*, included in the posthumous folio *Poems* (1667), exemplifies both circumstances.

While completing the chronological census, I checked the plays and collected the dedications, when present, by drawing on two main repositories: *Early English Books Online* (EEBO) and *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online* (ECCO). The online *English Short Title Catalogue* (ESTC) was particularly helpful to find whether there were reissues or reeditions of the play and whether these contained the dedicatory texts, as well as in locating the surviving copies. The actual early editions of plays including female dedications were also consulted in the British Library, the Bodleian Library, Cambridge University Library, the Folger Library and the Kroch Manuscripts and Rare Books Library during four research stays (Oxford University, Cambridge University, American University and Cornell University). This allowed me, for instance, to retrieve the fragment of John Dancer's dedication of *Agrippa* (1675) to the Lady Mary Cavendish which was missing in the copy of the Huntington Library digitised in *EEBO*. Moreover, I consulted the manuscript plays held in the libraries listed above and I requested digitised copies of the ones at the Huntington Library, in order to look for any potential dedicatory epistles. In doing so, I found Anne Wharton's dedication of *Love's Martyr* (c. 1685) to Mary Howe, which is at the British Library.

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<sup>16</sup> The plays in question were *The Playhouse to Be Let*, *The Law against Lovers*, *The Distresses*, *The Siege*, and *The Fair Favourite*.

<sup>17</sup> Lower's compilation was made of the remaining copies of the three separate editions, as Langbaine indicates: "Three of these Plays; viz. *Amorous Phantasm*, *Enchanted Lovers*, *Noble Ingratitude*, were printed together at the Hague, during the Author's Exile; and at His Majesty's Return, the Remainder of the Copies were purchas'd by Mr. Kirkman, who printed new Titles in the Year 1661" (1691 334). In fact, a number of copies maintain intact the original title-page of *The Enchanted Lovers*, whose imprint reads "Hague: printed by Adrain Vlack. 1658."

All in all, I examined a total of 565 plays published between 1660 and 1714. Of these, 352 (62%) contained dedications, 84 of which (23%) were addressed to women: 71 dedicatory epistles and 13 inscriptions.<sup>18</sup> The data gathered from the corpus shows that dedications were addressed to women of different social extraction, including members of the royal family, noblewomen, Charles II's mistresses, the gentry and commonalty.

### **1.3 The female dramatic dedication in the Restoration period**

This doctoral project aims at examining dramatic dedications addressed to women during the reigns of the late Stuart monarchs (1660-1714) in an attempt to assess the scope of female patronage in Restoration theatre. To do so, I have studied these texts from the perspective of gift-exchange theories, following Pierre Bourdieu's *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977). In order to measure the symbolic capital that authors attribute to their works, I have elaborated a catalogue of rhetorical motifs (dedicatory topoi), based on the epistles themselves, which has allowed me to elucidate the characteristics of female dramatic dedications and identify the strategies used by authors to establish and consolidate cliental relationships. The analysis has provided valuable information regarding the support that women offered dramatists.

As a preliminary step, I will begin by reviewing the literature on patronage and dedications of plays during the Restoration period and Long Eighteenth century (Chapter 2). This is followed by a discussion of Bourdieu's conception of gift-exchange economy and its use in the interpretation of patronage (Chapter 3). Drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's theories, I have studied dedications as instances of symbolic capital and I have attempted to assess the calculation done by the authors themselves, with the intention of discovering their position in the literary field. The second part of the

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<sup>18</sup> In *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (1987), Gérard Genette distinguishes between dedications and inscriptions. Genette argues that "both practices consist of offering the work as a token of esteem to a person. . . . But one of these practices involves the material reality of a single copy and, in principle, ratifies the gift or consummated sale of that copy [inscriptions], whereas the other involves the ideal reality of the work itself, the possession of which (and therefore its transfer, gratis or not) can quite obviously be only symbolic [dedications] (117). I am using the same terms, although in this work "inscriptions" refer to short dedicatory addresses, which generally appear on title-pages and employ the formula "inscribed to," followed by the name of the patroness. The list of dedications and inscriptions are included in the Appendixes 1 and 2.

chapter contains the examination of the rhetoric of dedicatory epistles and the classification of the most recurrent dedicatory topoi. The following four chapters include the discussion of the dedications themselves, which I have grouped according to the social status of the dedicatee: chapter 4 begins reviewing the epistles addressed to members of the royal family, including the extended royal family; chapter 5 comprises the dedications addressed to Charles II's mistresses; chapter 6 those addressed to members of the nobility; chapter 7 the ones presented to members of the gentry and commonalty and chapter 8 offers the conclusions of this thesis.

## 2. Studies on literary patronage and dedications

Early studies on literary patronage have traditionally been marked by a restricting conception of this system which viewed it almost exclusively as an economic phenomenon. Dedications have been ignored or misinterpreted, since the compensation that authors received in exchange seemed insignificant. Given that the royal funds of the late Stuarts were meagre, scholars have claimed the patronage system was in decline by the second half of the seventeenth century. Therefore, the profusion of dedications of plays during these years was difficult to explain. However, in the last decades of the twentieth century, scholars a wider approach to the study of this phenomenon and started to analyse dedications under the framework of gift exchange theories, which has resulted in richer interpretations of literary patronage.

### 2.1 Early studies of literary patronage

The first scholar to investigate aspects related to literary patronage in Restoration England was Alexandre Beljame. The main topics of *Le Public et les hommes de lettres en Angleterre au dix-huitième siècle:1660-1744* (1881) are the rise and development of professional authorship and the emergence of a reading public.<sup>1</sup> Beljame selected John Dryden, Joseph Addison and Alexander Pope as representative writers of the period, and contextualised their careers by comparing them to other contemporary authors. The thorough and varied documentation on which Beljame's arguments are based is one of the strongest points of this landmark study. It includes a vast array of both primary and secondary sources, such as plays, poems, essays, newspapers, letters and diaries, as well as general studies on history and literature. Beljame's ideas on Restoration theatre set the basis for subsequent scholarship. As he pointed out, given King Charles II's enthusiasm for drama, this genre became a preferred medium for displaying wit and taste. Depending on their literary expertise, courtiers would translate or write drama, prologues and songs, or at least act as critics. Since coteries and factions within the nobility could easily determine the success of

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<sup>1</sup> The edition consulted is Bonamy Dobrée's translation *Men of Letters and the English Public in the Eighteenth Century* (1948).

plays, authors belonging to the gentry or commonalty relied on the protection of court favourites, to whom they dedicated their works. According to Beljame, a dedicatory epistle addressed to a great nobleman was almost a requisite to publish a play, for it was the dedicatee's name which impressed and persuaded readers to purchase it.<sup>2</sup> Since etiquette forbade dedicating a work to the king without permission and a refusal would have been detrimental, authors resorted to indirect strategies to gain access to him: to address another member of the royal family or a mistress (the second being allegedly more effective).<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, Beljame explained and estimated the sources of income for playwrights, which comprised the proceeds of the third performance, the selling of the manuscript to a bookseller and gifts from patrons. Finally, he showed that after the Revolution of 1688 there was a gradual change from aristocratic to political patronage, as the Whigs established a tradition of clientelism in ministerial circles, which was rapidly imitated by the Tories.

The main limitation of Beljame's study is that he adopted a dogmatic and prescriptive approach. Not only did he make value judgements on the frivolity of courtly coteries, but he also relied on a concept of author and public formed on his own historical circumstances. The portrayal of aspiring professional playwrights as depending entirely on court favourites and praising them for their nobility rather than

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<sup>2</sup> For instance, Etherege's name did not appear on the title page of his first comedy—*The Comical Revenge* (1664)—but in the dedicatory epistle, which was addressed to Charles Sackville, Lord Buckhurst (the future sixth earl of Dorset and first earl of Middlesex).

<sup>3</sup> According to Beljame, the procedure when choosing a dedicatee from the royal family was first to approach the duchess of Monmouth, then the duke himself and finally the duke or the duchess of York. However, this pattern was only followed by Dryden and not consistently; he also dedicated some of his plays to aristocrats who were not part of the royal family, for instance, the earl of Orrery, the duke of Newcastle or Lord Clifford of Chudleigh. Another strategy pointed out by Beljame consisted in writing about the king, hoping that he would learn of the commendation (this would also serve to propitiate readers and gain their admiration).

their literary knowledge might be imprecise in many cases.<sup>4</sup> Beljame gave excessive credit to satirical statements, words put into characters' mouths and writers' complaints as expressed in dedications and prefaces, which are informative but need to be considered with more distance. Furthermore, Beljame suggested that some authors would only write to have a pretext for a dedication, for he assumed that patrons would automatically show their gratitude by sending a purse.<sup>5</sup> Overall, since Beljame's purpose was to trace the advent of professional authorship as culminating in the figure of Alexander Pope, the Restoration period is treated as a preamble of the eighteenth century.

A few years after the publication of Beljame's study appeared Henry Benjamin Wheatley's *The Dedication of Books to Patron and Friend* (1887), which is based on a similar misconception of the patronage system. In his view, since it was not necessary that the subject matter was connected with the dedicatee, a book "often degenerated into a mere vehicle for the fulsome praise of some worthless being" (2).<sup>6</sup> Wheatley saw the dedications of the seventeenth century as marked by "slavish adulation," and emphasised his disgust noting: "how thoroughly the disease had eaten into the heart of the nation may be seen from the terms which a noble English man like John Evelyn was not ashamed to use towards Charles II" (14).<sup>7</sup> Wheatley considered that seventeenth-

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<sup>4</sup> For instance, Thomas Shadwell's *The Miser* (1671) was dedicated to the earl of Dorset and in it the author praises his patron for his "obliging kindness to the Poets, and . . . great example in writing, as if you were design'd by Heaven, among many other great uses, for the sustaining of declining Poetry" (15). In addition, John Dryden's *The Assignation* (1673) and Thomas Shadwell's *A True Widow* (1679) were dedicated to Charles Sedley, whom the first praises for his wit and the second describes as "the best of the Poets" (283). Similarly, in the dedication of *Sir Barnaby Whig* (1681) to George Berkeley, Thomas D'Urfey expresses the honour "to be impartially Judg'd, by a person who knows as well how to write, as to patronize" (A2), and adds that Berkeley once showed him a book of his own writing "where he that reads may find an exact serenity of Fancy, a vivacity of Wit, a refin'd Elegance in Language, and observe it to be adorn'd with certain Jems of Morality and Divinity, and other maxims of Rational Wisdom" (A2v).

<sup>5</sup> One of the examples provided by Beljame is the Latin poet Payne Fisher, who certainly needed to rely more on patrons than playwrights given his limited readership.

<sup>6</sup> Wheatley compared dedicatory writing in Restoration England to its practice among the ancients (for instance, Horace, Virgil, Cicero and Lucretius), who "had something of value to offer to the patrons in return for patronage and support" (2).

<sup>7</sup> In the dedicatory epistle of *Fumifugium* (1661) to Charles II, Evelyn explains how he enjoyed "the Sight of Your Illustrious Presence, which is the Joy of Your People's hearts" (A2).



century authors “sold their lying praises for money” (120), since their addressees were thought undeserving of such commendations, given their alleged dissolute character. According to Wheatley, “Dryden lavished a profusion of virtues upon men and women who were often unworthy of any praise at all; and sometimes men were praised for virtues which were the opposite of the qualities they possessed” (121). With regards to their style, “being in prose, it is more difficult to overlook the absurdity of the hyperbolic language when taken in connection to the despicableness of the person to whom all these fine words are addressed” (121).

Like Beljame, Wheatley underlined the magnitude of the dedication of plays in this period: “hardly a play was issued without a dedication which had been paid for by a patron who lacked modesty, and for which money had been received by an author without shame” (141). Wheatley’s study is remarkable for dealing exclusively with dedications, although his ideas are certainly biased by his own moral judgments on the epoch, and as a result, offer a wrong assessment of the patronage system.<sup>8</sup>

In the early decades of the twentieth century Arthur Simons Collins, in his *Authorship in the Days of Johnson* (1927), analysed the relationship between the four participants in the field of letters (writers, patrons, publishers and the public) and concluded that by 1780 the public had become large enough to fund writers. According to A. S. Collins, authors could earn income as long as they satisfied “the literary appetite of the day” and those who pretended to be “in advance of one’s day” used this posture as “the only excuse for failure, and the most justifiable claim to patronage” (210). Collins claimed that “to good writers the advantage of patronage was relatively slight, and its absence little felt” (210). The following statement illustrates his view of patronage: “it was enervating; it was unbecoming the dignity of the profession of letters; in politics it was open to abuse, and harmed the writer with the public; above all, it was unnecessary” (212).

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<sup>8</sup> As regards the praise of patrons, William Hagestad explained that what other scholars had interpreted as artificial flattery was one of the staple strategies for the enhancement of literary works; praising the dedicatee was a rhetorical convention and was completely justified within the context of dedications. Similarly, Richard McCabe argued that authors were expected to resort to idealised paradigms in order to propitiate the dedicatee. He observed that hyperbole and flattery were intrinsic to the panegyric and that dedications were nothing else but panegyrics in epistolary form.

To reach this conclusion, Collins analysed the relation between author and patron in the reigns of Charles II and Queen Anne. Since his conception of patronage was reduced to a mere economic issue, Collins assumed that the funds of the royal treasury did not facilitate patronage and that the crown favoured “those alone who would pander to the passions and follies of the times” (114). In addition, he argued that most patrons had a political agenda: “that was the line patronage was to follow for the next few years, the maintenance of brilliant young men for political ends” (117-118).<sup>9</sup> Men of wealth and rank took part in the system, since they felt it as a duty inherent to their position in society. However, from the accession of George I, the comfortable state of sponsored authorship began to decline, first on its political side, then in the realm of social patronage: “literary patronage had been a fashion of the times, set by ministers who were intimately connected with the Court. When ministers no longer set the fashion . . . there was no one to continue a leader of this honourable fashion” (121).

Collins briefly dealt with the practice of dedicating literature, which “had been disinterested at the beginning, but which by 1730 had sunk very low indeed” (180). He outlined the different reasons that caused the decline of the patronage system: the growth of the reading public, the alliance between author and bookseller, and internal political breakdown. As a final reason, he pointed to the fact that dedicatory writing “was abused and became ridiculous, at once loathsome and a common jest” (218). For Collins, men of wealth supported writers not out of generosity but out of vanity; they would surround themselves with authors so as to have wit shown off at their tables. Even though Restoration patronage did not constitute the focus of Collins’ study, it is evident that he considered the system in purely economic terms, and thus failed to account for its complexity.

Similarly, in *The Profession of English Letters* (1964) James Saunders argued for the triumph of print culture in the second half of the seventeenth century, which made “a genuine literary profession” (93). In his view, the increasing volume of activity

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<sup>9</sup> Collins points to the earl of Dorset, Baron Sommers and the earl of Halifax as the main patrons of the time. Somers supported John Locke, Joseph Addison, George Hickes and George Vertue, although Collins fails to provide evidence for Somers’ support. With regards to Halifax, he contended that his political eminence allowed him to act as “a veritable Maecenas of literature” (116). To back up this claim, Collins mentioned the different positions Halifax gave to Congreve, Newton and Addison.

encouraged a large number of fulltime writers, who were able to demand from readers proper professional rewards and professional esteem (94). Saunders considered that authors found drama “increasingly limited and disappointing” (105) and that between the years 1660 and 1740, the theatre gradually ceased to attract and reward men of letters. Although he pointed out that, at the same time drama established itself “in the affections not only of cliques in London but also of the general public all over the country” (105), he claimed that the growth of the theatre caused a concomitant decline in its literary qualities.

Saunders argued that during the Restoration the theatres became “the private domain of a courtly set,” given that only two licences were granted (105). Furthermore, he painted a somewhat fanciful picture of the theatrical world: the dramatists of the period were usually aristocrats; the actors retained a high social status and many of them were trained at courtly schools; several actresses were the mistresses of noble patrons; the audiences tended to be genteel (106-107). He claimed that in the years when courtly coterie dominated the theatre, drama was an amateur art. However, with the decay of the power of the court, aristocrats were no longer so fully occupied as before with courtly life. The fashionable patrons of the theatre from 1700 onwards were, according to Saunders, less intellectual (109).

Saunders provided inaccurate information on the conditions of the world of letters in the seventeenth century. The consolidation of print culture and the appearance of a self-regulated marketplace took place from the beginning of the eighteenth century onwards but did not imply the immediate decay of patronage, as both systems were operative at the time. Moreover, the influence of court culture in Restoration theatre is undeniable, though not exclusive. There were some amateur dramatists, especially in the first decades of the Restoration period, but its leading authors (such as Dryden, Shadwell, Otway and Congreve) were professional playwrights.

In *The Age of Patronage: the Arts in Society 1660-1750* (1971), Michael Foss resumed the long-established views on patronage. Similarly to Saunders, he argued that during the Restoration the “old systems of courtly and aristocratic patronage” lost their splendor: the arts were thus “forced to follow wealth, now more widely

distributed” (17). Like Beljame and Collins, he also alluded to the growing importance of politics, which gradually replaced the aristocratic fashion. Foss claimed the system did not possess its former resources. Artists expected to receive patronage, but found that “neither their genius nor their service qualified them to pass into the enhanced realm” (21).

However, Foss signaled that King Charles had a genuine interest in the arts and that he truly enjoyed the conversation of writers, painters, philosophers and men of taste (26). Moreover, young noblemen, who had money and leisure similarly took an interest in the arts; they felt they constituted “the society of the Wits” and gradually became arbiters of taste and some even became productive artists themselves (32). Most of the wits had a real penchant and appreciation for the arts, and they generously gave money to the deserving. The patrons of the Restoration offered their services to literature, particularly the theatre, which strongly benefited from court attention (41). Furthermore, Foss assumed that the first Restoration playwrights were aristocrats (with significant exceptions like Dryden), and they mainly produced drama for a court audience.

Foss also referred to the financial drawbacks of the aristocratic patronage system. Throughout his reign Charles II had to strive to obtain funds from Parliament: “payments for artists were usually in arrears and often not paid at all” (45). Inefficiency and a corrupt administration hampered the functioning of the system. He concluded that “money to support the work of men outside the artistic departments of the court was rarely available and erratically spent” (45). All artists needed thus to rely on other sources of income, besides aristocratic patronage.

On the contrary, amateur authors did not write for money. Foss claimed that Restoration men of letters expected to gain both fame and fortune from the stage, but unfortunately it was a rather demanding enterprise: the taste of the court was difficult to please, and the prospect of failure and heavy financial loss was discouraging both for playwrights and theatre managers. Foss thus concluded that king and court failed to encourage and develop the arts because they no longer exerted real power in the country (partly, because the monarch became less and less able to provide funding). As

a result, artists had to turn away from the court and took inspiration and money from other sources (50).

One of these alternative sources was public patronage, which towards the end of the seventeenth century offered artists several advantages: “they became less dependent on the whim and the favour of the court and aristocrats and to that extent gained a little in human dignity” (87). Politicians also took an interest in artists, particularly writers, which they could use as instruments of propaganda. In return, they provided official positions to their protégés, which allowed them to live comfortably; the more actively they were engaged in politics, the greater the rewards (142). Foss provides a contradictory picture in which the court and members of the elites were genuinely interested in the arts, but failed to sponsor writers because they lacked the necessary resources. The main drawback of his account is again that he reduces patronage to its economic dimension; thus Foss does not explain accurately the enduring practice of dedications and its peculiarities.

## **2.2 Beyond economics: Redefining patronage**

In a doctoral dissertation entitled “Restoration Patronage” (1966), William Hagestad studied what he termed “the literature of patronage,” that is, texts belonging to the convention of patronage (dedications, prefaces, panegyrics, commendations and other addresses) written by minor poets during the reign of Charles II.<sup>10</sup> The authors discussed were classified into four categories: “poetical divines” (poets who held ecclesiastical livings or university positions), poets of good circumstances, unsuccessful and successful professionals. Hagestad primarily focused on the relationship between the living conditions of these writers and their handling of the practice of dedicatory writing.

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<sup>10</sup> Hagestad explains that he borrowed the phrase “literature of patronage” from Patricia Thomson (“The Literature of Patronage, 1580-1630,” 1952). Although her study was circumscribed to Elizabethan and Jacobean poets, Thomson was one of the first scholars to argue that the patron’s function went beyond the bestowal of bounty and could extend to providing home, education, position and protection. She also insisted that literary complaints referring to the lack of remuneration cannot be interpreted as evidence of the decay of literary patronage.

Hagestad disproved the consideration of patronage as solely an economic system, one—moreover—that was allegedly obsolete in the Restoration. Despite the different circumstances of these authors, “none disdained use of the convention of dedication in search for patronage” (123). Most significantly, not even those “who enjoyed advantages civic, social, and professional, securities and positions in life which would surely have allowed them to eschew a moribund convention of dedication and address, had that been its condition” (123). Hagestad argued that in their dedications they all attempted to derive prestige for their works, from the desirability of the patron’s good name, and consequently “honor, confidence, and stature” as men of letters (313). As he pointed out

a good name at the head of a work sealed its approval; the author’s praise of that good name established the author’s own worthiness. If the author had the advantage of a personal connection with an individual of good name, then that was to be demonstrated; that was the setting of a crown upon the author’s worthiness. . . . That was the utility of the convention; that is the justification and the sense of its rhetoric. This allows us to declare that patronage was altogether a do-it-yourself affair. (331-332)

Hagestad explained what other scholars understood as artificial flattery or a submissive or cynical attitude (for instance, the shifting choice of patrons according to political circumstances) as a rhetorical practice, pointing out that in dedicatory writing “that operation was justified: a poet needed good names to enhance his work” (280). The dignity of a good name and the praise of its bearer were the staple strategies for improving the work, which was the conventional design of dedications.

Nonetheless, Hagestad admitted that some unsuccessful professional poets used the convention to place their work better in the publishing market. These authors, as Hagestad showed, were “curiously inept” in dedications, given that “some texts . . . betrayed their authors’ bitterness about their circumstances; other texts . . . set forth with great candor the shortcomings of the convention and announced its futility” (173). Since eminence only brought in money indirectly (and not automatically), writers whose subsistence depended exclusively on their works might refer to the futility of the convention, in the sense that it was useless for securing a living. As Hagestad insisted

and proved throughout his dissertation, “the commodity at stake in a dedication . . . was the honor of the author” (333).

According to Hagestad, dedications in which authors used the convention to denounce it or to declare openly what they sought “appeared in plays and books of verse published at the end of the reign of Charles II or later,” marking “a sharp decline, almost a cynical fall, in the usefulness of our convention” (156). It should be noted that by “futility” and “usefulness,” he meant that dedicatory writing had lost its primary, traditional design (the gaining of prestige for the work and its creator through praise of the patron). Nevertheless, Hagestad did not provide sufficient explanation for this transformation, nor for the emergence of satires of the convention: in his own words, “honor could not be so cheaply bought as by dedication in the age of sense. The condition of praise could no longer purchase honor in eighteenth-century England” (352).

In “Types of Eighteenth-Century Literary Patronage” (1974), Paul Korshin outlined the different forms of literary patronage functioning during the eighteenth century to offer a fresh view of the phenomenon.<sup>11</sup> Korshin argued that historically patronage had been considered pejoratively and that it was assumed to be exclusively financial (453). He observed a tendency among eighteenth-century scholars to regard patronage as corrupt and corrupting, symbolizing “the subservience and dependency of the writer upon a dominant aristocracy” (454). As a result, the decay of patronage represented “the liberation of the man of letters from a financial tyranny” (454). According to Korshin, however, the disappearance of the old-system of patronage did not improve the living conditions of authors.

Korshin referred to the difficulty of determining how much private and public support was given to writers in the eighteenth century, due to the lack of official records on public patronage (455). He claimed that there was considerable evidence that deriving financial support from literature was a strenuous task in the middle of the century: contemporary biographies, memoirs by writers and the surviving records of

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<sup>11</sup> As Korshin pointed out, literary patronage could be channelled through the support of a publisher, the interest of a subscription-buying public, the approbation of the audience or the granting of public or private positions.

publishers showed the precarious economic situation of many writers (456). However, as Korshin pointed out, this predicament was not exclusive of the period, for even in the years of royal munificence few writers had become wealthy through writing.

Korshin stated that the lack of royal means hindered any form of direct, financial patronage (grants or gifts to authors to help them pursue their art) and that, although the nobility replaced the crown and acted as sponsor, direct patronage was limited (457). He also argued that even though the number of peers doubled during the eighteenth century (from about 150 in 1700 to almost 300 in 1800), very few of them were interested in supporting literature (459). Neither was apparently the wealthy gentry, for no evidence of large or continuous patronage of the arts from this group remains (459). As for direct support or appointment to official positions, patronage was not more substantial than it had been in the Renaissance (463). The writing population exploded while court and crown influence remained relatively stable. As a result, patronage took other forms such as publication by subscription, which Korshin considered a new variety of literary patronage. Subscription democratised literary patronage by making it possible for a community of wealthy people to contribute to the support of many authors (464).

In addition, Korshin dealt briefly with dedications, whose persistence, together with the existence of satires on the practice, showed that they produced profits, though not very generous (466). He described dedicatory epistles as “the most visible part of an intricate but limited tradition of economic rewards for authorship” (467). He stated that a writer might dedicate a book to his regular, steady patron, who gave him full support, although this situation was very rare. As Korshin pointed out, it was very unlikely that authors relied on dedications for anything more than “incidental bounty,” since gifts from dedicatees were seldom larger than £20 or £30 and more usually £10 (467).<sup>12</sup> Dedications functioned as a graceful and expected introduction to a work, “probably because an ornamental address to a member of the royal family of the House of Lords was thought likely to expand the sales of a book” (467-468).

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<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, Collins claimed that under Queen Anne the customary reward given in exchange for a dedication amounted to five or ten guineas (181).



After examining Johnson's attitude to patronage throughout his literary career, Korshin concluded that authors would not accept a situation of dependency upon a private patron; Johnson only accepted sponsorship provided that it was public, impersonal and free of obligations (472). Korshin considered that Johnson's position indicated the eighteenth-century trend whereby support of literature moved gradually from the hands of a privileged few to those of the readership and the government (472). Nonetheless, it is inaccurate to reduce the different opinions on the system of literary patronage to a single author, even if Korshin acknowledged that the relationship of a single writer to patronage did not completely explain it (472). Nonetheless, Korshin contended that patronage was "entrenched, through custom, convenience and plain necessity" (473). He saw eighteenth century patronage as evolving into "a unique blending of free enterprise, commercial venture, private beneficence, and public or audience support" (473). The system was "surprisingly workable," even if it benefited relatively few authors and, since an open market for literary property had not yet fully developed, patronage survived because it was necessary (473).

David Roberts's *The Ladies: Female Patronage of Restoration Drama 1660-1700* (1989) was one of the first attempts to evaluate the role of women as patrons of the stage during the Restoration period.<sup>13</sup> Roberts also considered the place of women in the patronage system. He agreed with the commonplace that Restoration playwrights lost the support of the court and were forced to seek other patrons (95). To support this point, he claimed that in the 1670s the number of performances held at court decreased significantly in favor of the French and Italian companies.<sup>14</sup> The main reason for this, according to Roberts, was the enduring tension between the aristocracy

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<sup>13</sup> Roberts's main purpose was to test John Harrington Smith's theory on the influence of the female audience in the change from satirical to sentimental comedy at the end of seventeenth century (see "Shadwell, the Ladies and the Change in Comedy," 1948). Smith's arguments had been contradicted by Hume in *The Development of English Drama* (1976). Roberts builds on Hume to conclude that there were different factions among "the ladies" and introduces factors such as women's position within marriage in the discussion.

<sup>14</sup> Roberts counted 43 performances at court, as opposed to 68 in the previous decade. He specified that "the only repeat performances were of *Calisto*, and the plays of the Italian and French comedians, and only seven new plays were seen there (only two of which, Ravenscroft's *The Citizen Turn'd Gentleman* and Otway's *Friendship in Fashion*, were comedies; the remainder were tragedies by Dryden, Lee, and Settle" (110n61).

and the theatre industry, “whether through the pretensions of the actors or the political daring of some playwrights,” which was “inimical to true patronage” (96).

Roberts also argued that whereas between 1660 and 1676 all playtexts except one were dedicated to a member of the court (or to someone connected with it), “thereafter publishers, soldiers, theatre-managers, and whores might be honoured with a play” (96).<sup>15</sup> It was precisely the alleged lack of changes in the social extraction of the dedicatees which induced Roberts to misjudge the importance of women’s patronage of the stage: “the fact that dedications to women did not follow the changing pattern of dedications in general, but were almost always addressed at least to Duchesses, shows that only a few very distinguished ladies were thought capable of effective action in favor of a play” (98).<sup>16</sup> Although Roberts did not list the corpus of dedications he worked on, it was certainly incomplete, for he also claimed that in the Restoration period (1660-1700) the number of plays dedicated to women was “pitiful small; fourteen, to be precise” (98) and that none of the dedicatees receive more than two. He interpreted this incomplete data—which is inaccurate—as evidence of “the superior power of individual male courtiers to influence public opinion, and therefore to the preference among dramatists for courting their favor rather than that of individual ladies” (98).<sup>17</sup>

Nevertheless, Roberts examined the interest that the Restoration queens and the occasional groups or factions of noblewomen (particularly, the maids of honour) has shown in the theatre.<sup>18</sup> According to Roberts, one of the main reasons for their interest

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<sup>15</sup> In fact, this number can be enlarged to four: John Tatham dedicated the second quarto of *The Rump* (1661) to a certain Walter James, a country gentleman; Thomas Thomson *The English Rogue* (1668) to Mrs Alice Barret; in 1671 Edward Revet dedicated *The Town-Shifts* to Stephen Mosedelf, Esq. and in 1674 J.D. dedicated *The Mall* to William Whitcomb Jr, Esq.; and Boothby offered *Marcelia* (1670) to Mary Yate, Lady Yate of Harvington.

<sup>16</sup> This was certainly not the case: between 1685 and 1700, there were eleven plays dedicated to countesses and a baroness, and four epistles were addressed to members of the gentry.

<sup>17</sup> The total number of dedicatory epistles addressed to women amounts to seventy-one. Furthermore, Mary of Modena, Mary and Anne Stuart, Anna Scott, Louise de Kéroualle, Elizabeth Monck, Henrietta Godolphin, Juliana Boyle received more than two dedications

<sup>18</sup> Roberts pointed out that the documents from the Public Records Office concerning the amounts owed to the theatres for seats at the playhouses revealed that the maids of honour regularly attended the monarchs at plays and that they enjoyed the bawdy comedies, such as *The London Cuckolds*, *The Souldiers Fortune* and *The Man of Mode* (107).

in the theatre was self-advertisement: “the lady of the Restoration Court was an object of fascination to the ordinary spectator of the Restoration Stage, and one well disposed to take advantage of the fact, capable of exercising control over the attention of the audience if not over the stage itself” (97). As he explained, for most aristocratic women being seen at the theatre provided an excellent opportunity to enhance their reputation, as long as they were cautious about avoiding smutty plays. They ladies needed to be reassured about the subject or the reputation of the author in advance, for their attendance was immediately interpreted as “an act of critical approval” (73).

Roberts attempted to further demonstrate “the slackness and inconsistency of patronage” among women at court by drawing on the little interest shown by the successive queens (119). He stressed the influence of patronage at the Caroline court and Henrietta Maria’s support of the stage, which had been both private and public. The queen would command performances by professional actors, as well as playtexts for amateur performances (sometimes influencing their purposes). For Roberts, “none of the Restoration Queens was able (or, it seems, willing) to exert such authority” (119-120).<sup>19</sup> Queen Catherine sought no involvement in the interests of the stage, apart from attending occasionally a variety of plays at the public playhouses, which included—together with *Othello*, *Hamlet* and several works by Fletcher—bold comedies such as *The Souldiers Fortune*, *The Amorous Widow*, *The London Cuckolds* and *An Evening’s Love* (120).<sup>20</sup> Thus, according to Roberts, her lack of interest was not due to the style of the plays, but to the uncomfortableness of the playhouse, for “she saw no Duke’s Company performances until their move . . . to the splendours of Dorset Garden” (120).

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<sup>19</sup> Karen Britland has argued that Henrietta Maria began to use drama for political propaganda in the season 1633-1634, when she and Charles I joined together “to promote a reform of theatre at court characterised by gentility, decorum and refined language” (59). Examples of these are the production of Shirley’s *The Young Admiral* in November 1633, as a birthday present to King Charles, and the one of Fletcher’s *The Faithful Shepherdess* on Twelfth Night 1634. According to Britland, the queen thus “helped validate theatre-going as a legitimate pastime” (66). Moreover, the next season (1634-1635), the queen sponsored an itinerant French troupe, led by Josias de Soulas and convinced her maids to mount *Florimène*, a pastoral play by François le Metel de Boisrobert (67).

<sup>20</sup>According to Roberts, Queen Catherine went to the theatre fourteen times between April 1680 and February 1685 (120n87).

As for Mary of Modena, Roberts defined her as “an enthusiastic but passive patron” (121). Towards the end of James II’s reign, the couple retreated for all but four productions to the theatre at Whitehall and they did not promote new plays: only one out of the thirty-seven plays staged at the palace during James’s reign—Crowne’s *Sir Courtly Nice*—was less than three years old. As Roberts pointed out, “conservatism and formality went before novelty and adventure” (121).

The attitude of the last monarch considered by Roberts, Mary II, was conditioned by the circumstances of her accession to the throne. Mary made twelve visits to the public theatre as monarch and was never accompanied by the king (121). Roberts explained that Mary II’s position was entangled by ethical and political considerations. As an example, Roberts cited Dryden’s performance of *The Spanish Fryar* on 28 May 1689, which embarrassed the queen due to the political parallels that could be drawn from the plot and occasioned the banning of the play (122).<sup>21</sup> This incident might have encouraged the queen to reconsider her relations with the stage, although Roberts attributed her attitude merely to lack of interest. As for her theatrical taste, Mary commanded a performance of Crowne’s *Sir Courtly Nice* three days after the episode of *The Spanish Fryar*, and other plays produced at her command were Dryden’s *Amphitryon* and Congreve’s *The Double Dealer* (123). She was also a regular admirer of the semi-operas of Purcell and certainly saw, with her maids of honour, *The Prophetess*, *King Arthur* and *The Fairy Queen* (124).

In conclusion, for Roberts there was little female patronage in the direct sense, but “mere enthusiasm, manipulation, and indifference took its place” (126). Although there were occasional influential factions, there was no regular involvement in the business of the theatre. Furthermore, these groups were small in number and probably short-lived, and they found little support at court. In Roberts’s view, the court provided the ladies no immediate tradition of sustained or organised patronage of the stage.

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<sup>21</sup> Dryden’s play, which featured a daughter usurping a banished father’s throne, had already been suppressed under James II on 8 December 1686 (P.R.O., L.C. 5/147, p. 239). Daniel Finch wrote about this episode: “Some unhappy expressions, among which those that follow, put her in some disorder, and forc’d her to hold up her fan, and often look behind her and call for her palatine and hood, and any think she could next think of” (qtd. in Van Lennep 371). Dryden’s *Cleomenes* was also censored for its political resonances, since the theme of the exiled ruler, a Spartan king languishing in sensual Egypt, offered a clear parallel of King James’s exile in Paris.

Despite the errors drawn from the incomplete corpus on which he based his arguments, Roberts's study of Restoration patronage remains relevant, for its wider consideration of patronage and for being the first to examine the role of women in dramatic patronage.

In *Literary Patronage in England: 1650-1800* (1996), Dustin Griffin argued that during the long eighteenth century high culture became accessible to a larger part of the population, though in new forms—subscriptions, concerts, public exhibitions of painting— and thus, a shift from noble to bourgeois sponsorship took place. However, he explained that “the patronage system . . . operated in such a way as to sustain the cultural authority of the traditional patron class—peers and country gentlemen” (10). There was neither a rapid or complete changeover from an aristocratic to a commercial culture, nor a sudden change from a patronage economy to a literary marketplace. According to Griffin, the period was “characterised by overlapping ‘economies’ of patronage and marketplace” (10). In Griffin's view, the system of patronage was a political and economic arrangement that yielded benefits to both parties. In addition, he considered that its most striking feature was that “it was always a site of contestation,” as writers, as well as patrons, manoeuvre for primacy and authority (11). Examples of this can be found in dedications, prefaces, letters, novels and poems, “in which authors, whether explicitly or obliquely, engage the topics of obligations, debts gratitude, benefit, dependence, and independence” (11).

Griffin contended that literary patronage was based on a cultural and economic system which can only be fully understood in political and socio-anthropological terms, that is, “as a personal relationship between the two parties unequal in status and resources, designed for mutual benefit of the two parties, and ultimately as a means of socio-political organization” (14). Griffin resorted to Bourdieu's sociology of culture, noting that the “cultural sphere” in commercial societies coincided with the “economic sphere” in archaic economies. Groups of power obtain symbolic “credit” by making gifts to poets, painters and musicians. By possessing objects of art and luxury, they also accumulated “symbolic capital,” for these goods attested to the “taste and distinction of their owners” (16). In a society based on rank, their “symbolic capital” was convertible into economic capital and material assets.

Griffin stated that hints of the exchange involved in patronage could be found in the very language of eighteenth-century dedications. These have to be read cautiously: “the client presumably says only what he knows the patron wants to hear, or credits the patron with virtues and motives currently fashionable” (17). He also emphasised the importance of reciprocity: “dedicating poets speak of the poet’s ‘right’ to receive the support of the great, and of the sole ‘right’ of the great to provide such support” (17). In exchange, authors often received immaterial gifts, for instance encouragement, protection, favour and authority (19). With regards to the patron, he invested symbolic capital in a work trusting to its success to prove himself as “an arbiter of taste” (25). Aristocrats were expected to spend money “tastefully,” not to boast of their wealth, but for their honour’s sake. Also, expenditure provided them with “greatness and prestige,” for magnificence was a public virtue, which involved “spending publicly, on ‘public objects,’ of interest to the whole city or the people of position in it” (36).

In a more recent study entitled *Authorship in the Long Eighteenth Century* (2014), Griffin questioned what he called ‘the Dunciadic myth,’ that is, the idealisation of the elegant eighteenth-century gentleman writer and the implicit approval of “the distinction between literary high culture and trashy popular culture” (9).<sup>22</sup> As Griffin explained, the reason why gentlemen writers (and those who liked to be considered so) insisted on preserving artistic standards was economic self-interest: “if you increase the supply of writers and writing, the price of literature goes down, and patrons . . . give up trying to choose between the better and the worse, and simply abandon the patronage of writers altogether” (9). The myth was convenient for those, like Pope, who wanted to conceal that they had discovered how to make profit from selling copyrights, and also for disappointed authors who need to justify their lack of success (9).

As an example to prove his point, Griffin considered the case of Dryden, who began his career as a Renaissance gentleman writer and by the end of it had anticipated ideas and styles of authorship that were to become common in the eighteenth century. Dryden derived income from patrons, family property, shares in theatrical companies, his salary as historiographer royal and poet laureate and some from a royal grant to his

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<sup>22</sup> Griffin derived the term from Alexander Pope’s *The Dunciad*, a mock-heroic satire on dullness and literary vices, published anonymously in 1728.

wife. Griffin claimed that Dryden, as a man of the theatre, particularly in the 1660s and 1670s, wrote to please the taste of his audience. While preserving the old idea of authorial fame and the function of praise, he became an entrepreneur writer (30). He well knew that authorship meant producing literary property that possessed cash value, as can be inferred from the letters exchanged with his bookseller. Nonetheless, as Griffin explained, Dryden did not feel he had outgrown the age of patronage, for his translation of *Juvenal* was dedicated to the earl of Dorset and his *Virgil* (1697) to three different benefactors (31). Dryden found no incongruity in combining the two roles of gentleman author and professional writer and in all his literary relationships he professed a strong sense of his honour.

After the Revolution of 1688 and the loss of his royal salary, Dryden faced economic hardship and returned to the commercial theatre; he then developed a profitable relationship with his bookseller Jacob Tonson and maintained his position in the network of patronage (32). According to Griffin, Dryden's example indicated that a new kind of authorship was emerging in the late seventeenth century, who was —so to speak— “an opportunist, ready to define or seize an occasion, to apply his talents to the case at hand” (33). Furthermore, Griffin argued that far from being an independent man of letters, the typical author of the time was entangled in an intricate web of social and political connections that defined a writer's working life and literary production itself (61). Many writers attached themselves to Whig and Tory ministers, and many of those who did not take part in high politics were involved in private networks. These circumstances not only limited authorial freedom and exerted pressure, but also afforded opportunities (64). Pressure (for instance, to produce a polemical argument for a particular occasion, or to suit the political desires of a patron or paymaster, to join a coterie or adopt conventional style) opened up possibilities to find a receptive audience or to advance a career.

Authors like Pope, who could be considered one of the first fully successful professionals, remained beneficiaries of the system of patronage that had largely funded literature in the Restoration period. As Griffin indicated, more careful examination of the circumstances of literary production (works commonly including a dedication and/or address to the reader) and of the language of dedications themselves shows that the

patronage system remained operative until the end of the eighteenth century, “binding many if not most authors to patrons in a complex cultural economy, through which certain clearly understood benefits were exchanged” (76). In conclusion, Griffin’s studies on authorship and literary patronage questioned the emergence of the modern author at the beginning of the eighteenth century and the ensuing decay of the patronage system. As he pointed out, patronage was not replaced immediately by a self-regulated literary marketplace, but continued to function throughout the period and authors were still dependent on this institution.

Paulina Kewes also touched on the subject of patronage in *Authorship and Appropriation: Writing for the Stage in England, 1660-1710* (1998). Kewes argued that the playwright’s growing social and economic visibility “was cause and consequence of the evolution of benefit arrangements” (20). The upward cultural status of dramatic authorship was triggered by the new theatrical marketplace after the Restoration (20). Printed texts enabled playwrights to introduce a dedication to a wealthy and influential patron, which endowed the playtext “with a permanence and prestige unparalleled by any other form of address” (25). She pointed out the variety of rewards, which included cash donation, hospitality at a nobleman’s country estate, ensuring the acceptance of a script by a company, boosting attendance on the poet’s night, eliciting royal favour, or a royal request for a performance at court. Furthermore, an influential patron could intercede on behalf of a playwright and extend political and financial protection. The relevance of Kewes’s study lies in the fact that it advances some relevant ideas, such as the connection between the competitive theatrical sphere and the authors’ reliance on patrons.

### **2.3 The dramatic dedication and literary patronage**

The first study to deal exclusively with dramatic dedications in the Restoration period was Stanley Archer’s “The Epistle Dedicatory in Restoration Drama” (1971). He noted that more than fifty percent of the plays published between 1660 and 1700



carried dedications, precisely, 258 out of 472.<sup>23</sup> After examining these texts, Archer concluded that dedications constituted a highly varied literary genre, although several features could be distinguished: the epistles were generally written in prose and addressed to a single patron; they retained the essential components of the personal letter (for instance, salutation, date, complimentary close, etc.) and presented freedom of content. Regarding their organisation and subject, many of them followed a general pattern of a) presenting the work to the patron; b) explaining why he/she had been chosen as such; c) and entreating him/her for protection (9). Dedications might sometimes reflect on political affairs or comment on play production, actors, the premiere and even dabble in literary criticism. Regarding the condemnation of praise, Archer explained that since the Restoration was an aristocratic age in which rank counted heavily, writers were inclined to believe that adulation was due the patron (10). He added that much criticism of flattery arose from the fact that certain patrons were considered unworthy by later ages; of these, the most harshly condemned were the duke and duchess of York, the Court Wits, and the mistresses and natural sons of King Charles. As Archer rightly pointed out, generalisations about patronage on the basis of these examples are inevitably misleading (10-11). By means of praise, the author attempted to gain the patron's protection and some monetary gift. These conventions of patronage were encouraged by publishers as well as authors. It seems that the rewards of dedicating were worthwhile and that the drama was in part supported by patronage in the Restoration period. Though brief, Archer's study shed new light on the subject. The relevance of his survey lies in the fact that he carried out a thorough analysis of dedications in order to account for the phenomenon of patronage. As a result, he provided a basic classification of some of the recurrent features and motifs of the genre.

Studies of literary patronage took a new direction thanks to the contribution of Deborah Payne. In "Patronage and the Dramatic Marketplace under Charles I and II" (1991), Payne outlined the economic and social obligations common to patronage, which were: "direct financial support; the exchange of gifts (such as money for a panegyric); appointment to a post (such as an ecclesiastical position); or

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<sup>23</sup> Archer drew on the corpus of Restoration plays included in the Readex Microprint Collection. He deliberately excluded the Lord Mayor's entertainments, short masques, plays published within poetic anthologies and collected editions of drama.

recommendation to someone who can secure such in exchange for social and political allegiance” (137). She characterised the Restoration stage as a “court theatre,” which implied a number of limitations regarding certain dramatic traditions and theatrical practices. Therefore, at this time “patronage came to constitute the very infrastructure of the theatrical system” (138). In addition, Payne pointed out that the patent system, which limited the playhouses to two, was a determining factor in consolidating theatrical patronage: “the issuing of patents exclusively to courtier dramatists who had proved themselves not only loyal royalists during the Civil War, but also purveyors of particular dramatic forms resulted in a severely curtailed repertory of plays” (139). Furthermore, since the theatre manager of the King’s Company came to be the Master of Revels, Killigrew and Davenant owned both the relations and the means of production. As she explained, “the organizational and regulatory aspects of the theatre companies virtually guaranteed the court’s patronal control of theatrical largesse” (139-140). Payne concluded that Restoration theatre was a cultural marketplace of generalised exchange, characterised by “asymmetrical-hierarchical relations” (147).

Moreover, in “The Restoration Dramatic Dedication as Symbolic Capital” (1990), Payne argued that both this literary genre and the cultural practice of patronage in this period needed to be reconsidered. She rejected post-capitalist views which underestimated the importance of patronage in the Restoration on purely monetary principles and claimed instead that dedicatory writing in the late seventeenth-century can be best understood in terms of anthropological theories of gift exchange. In her opinion, we can only begin to appreciate the culture of dramatic patronage by extending economic calculation, in Pierre Bourdieu’s words, “to all goods, material and symbolic, without distinction, that present themselves as being rare and worthy of being sought after in a particular social formation” (31).

Drawing on Bourdieu, Payne sketched a system in which playwrights, besides economic gain, acquired also a symbolic capital of honour and prestige through the success of their plays. They would then invest this symbolic capital, presenting their work to an influential patron by means of a dedicatory epistle. In return for this offering, they expected to receive rewards that went beyond the mere pecuniary gift:

social support, protection from detractors and a point of access to the patron's network of connections. Since the person addressed always occupied a higher position, dedications were asymmetric forms of exchange. The playwright therefore assumed a lowly stand, heaping praise on his patron as well as humble acknowledgements of obligation.

David Bergeron's *Textual Patronage in English Drama, 1570-1640* (2006) does not focus on the Restoration period, but is still relevant for the light it sheds on female patronage. Although the Jacobean court has been characterised as antifeminist, women held positions of prominence. They operated chiefly as patrons of the arts, offering support and also attending private and public theatres (74). Some of them sponsored theatrical events, or appeared in private performances of masques—such as Mary Herbert, countess of Pembroke, and Elizabeth Cary (74-76). Bergeron stressed the importance of aristocratic patronage, describing the court as “the single most significant institution for the support of drama, including within its bureaucracy a Master of the Revels and, ultimately, in the reign of King James, placing all the principal acting companies under royal patronage” (76). He added that, apart from the city governments, trade guilds and the Inns of Court, the larger group of theatre patrons included “a diverse and wide-ranging collection of noblemen and courtiers, including women” (77). Moreover, publication provided “a reading public who participated in the textual economies and expanded the scope of patronage” (77).

Bergeron aimed to acknowledge “the nature of women's significance as participants in textual patronage” (77). He considered that the purposes of authors who dedicated their plays to women did not differ radically from those who addressed men. Among their intentions, Bergeron listed “to become known to a patron, to honor a special event, and to have the play received favorably” (79). He identified fourteen women who acted as dedicatees of drama (73), the most prominent of whom were the countess of Bedford and the countess of Pembroke; the first received more dedications than any other patroness and exerted her influence as patroness over a forty-four year period, from 1583 to 1627 (82); the second was renowned for her support of writers and received a number of dedications of literary works from Daniel, Spenser, Davies, Breton, Morley and Fraunce (85). Bergeron concluded that women contributed to the

creation and active support of the drama, providing authors with inspiration, financial support and offering the quality of favorable recognition (89). Moreover, the patronesses actively took part in “the social energy of drama,” enriching and enhancing the circulation of authority (89).

In *'Ungainefull Arte': Poetry, Patronage and Print in the Early Modern Era* (2016), Richard McCabe considered the importance of patronage to the literary career, examining not only the rhetoric of dedications but also how traditional modes of literary patronage were influenced by the challenge of print, as the economies of gift-exchange contended with those of the marketplace. To that end, he explored “the various ways in which the practice of dedication, an inheritance from ancient and medieval scribal culture, continued to operate and develop in the age of print” (2). Dedications were the single most consistent feature of early modern printed books. However, dedicatees were not automatically, or even generally, known to have acted as patrons: the mere existence of a dedication does not constitute evidence of a patron-client bond.<sup>24</sup> As McCabe pointed out, “power, wealth, and rank drew the attention of those seeking advancement or support, even where no relationship existed between the parties” (1-2). He attempted to explore the implications of print and book marketing in an attempt to supply a more nuanced view of the literary and social construction of patronal relationships.

Following the work of the social anthropologists S.N. Eisenstadt and L. Roniger (*Patrons, Clients and Friends*), McCabe assessed patronage as part of a macro-societal context which involved “issues of hierarchy, social asymmetry, status anxiety, locality, kinship, credit, and obligation” (3). A noteworthy feature of patronage was the lack of fixed rules or contractual obligations; it was a dynamic social process endlessly negotiated between the parties concerned. For authors, it was in their best interest to depict their works as independent art instead of “mercenary homage” (16). Here McCabe made an enlightening point: “the need to assert independence in dedications and eulogies is in inverse proportion to the freedom enjoyed” (16). A further

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<sup>24</sup> McCabe argues that the vast amount of dedications to Leicester, Essex and Prince Henry corroborates their popularity and prestige rather than any generous sponsorship of letters (1).

implication of defining patronage in affective terms was the possibility for authors to offer their works as gifts:

What the poet presents is a material gift with immaterial benefits, the conduit to an immortality the recipient cannot otherwise attain. . . . The author's name on the title-page establishes eternal properties in the text, and the dedication textualizes the dedicatee. The 'gift' is also an act of appropriation. At the heart of the matter is a negation between the patron's present celebrity and the poet's future fame— and only through the latter can the patron's memory endure (16-17).

Patronal relations defined in those terms benefited both parties: through illustrious patronage poets attained authority on talent (even canonicity): “the greater the patron's authority, the better the prospects; the highest authority might even confer the laurel crown” (17). Patrons, for their part, accumulated symbolic capital by sponsoring talented authors, which was essential to the magnificence expected of a person of rank (6). As McCabe explained, magnificence functioned both as an expression of status and a means to gain it, that is, “patronage became the ‘art of the powerful’ and magnificence its aesthetic” (45).

In addition, McCabe discussed the relevance of the advent of print for the patronage system. The printing press afforded authors the enticing economy of the open market, although it threatened, at its worst, to downgrade them to the level of hired penmen. The expansion of print culture demanded some mark of “illustrious patronal recognition” that distinguished an author from the rising number of writers promoted by the new medium (7). Recognition was conveyed through dedications, which canvassed patronal relationships to a wider audience and offered advantages to both authors and patrons. The circulation of printed dedications “enhanced a patron's visibility while recommending the dedicator to a network of other influential writers, printers, and patrons” (65).

One of the main drawbacks of the wider exposure of patronal relations was that readers became the ultimate arbiters of success or failure. Also, since literary works were both private and public gifts, readers could condemn the authors as presumptuous (83). Nevertheless, the ultimate purpose of the dedication is to forge a patronal link between author and dedicatee, and this was possible thanks to the patron's social status,

which qualified him to recognise literary merit: “Not the world but the patron . . . is the true arbiter of taste, the one who will see what common readers miss” (83).

McCabe further considered the implications of the creation of the office of poet laureate in the Restoration, and the effect it had on the professional career and public reputation of John Dryden. As McCabe explained, “the highest honour entails the greatest compromise” and proximity to power often lessened artistic freedom (315). In McCabe’s view, Dryden was the last official poet laureate who could claim independent literary merit. Furthermore, McCabe stressed that while initially printing offered the prospect of independence, eventually it implied transferring patronage to publishers, printers and buyers of books (315). However, McCabe claimed that publication by subscription offered some advantages with regard to the dependency of individual patronage, since subscribers participated in “a collective act of mutual support for the benefit of the community, as well as the author” (317). McCabe’s comprehensive analysis of literary patronage in Early Modern literature and the impact of print is of relevance to our study because some of the basis of the practice of dedications were settled at this time. Like Payne and Griffin, McCabe drew on the theories of Marcel Mauss and Pierre Bourdieu and associated patronage with systems of generalised exchange and gift-economies, while taking into account the circumstances of the emergent literary market and its impact on the forms of authorial self-representation.

Finally, María José Mora has recently examined in detail the dedications of the comedies produced in the years 1660-1670 and 1671-1682 in the introductory chapters of the two volumes of the *Restoration Comedy Catalogue* (2014, 2019). Although tragedies and other genres are excluded from the analysis, the study offers valuable insight into the practice of dedicatory writing: choice of dedicatees, format, contents and style of the texts. Mora showed that dedications grew popular over the years: in the 1660s, 18 out of 55 catalogued plays (33%) included a dedication, while in the period 1671-1682 the proportion increased to 35 out of 83 (42%) (Gómez-Lara 22; Mora 18). Most dedications were inserted in the first edition of the comedies and reproduced

verbatim in subsequent editions (Gómez-Lara 22; Mora 18).<sup>25</sup> She also indicated that, at least in the texts printed between 1671 and 1682, dedicatory epistles, together with other prefatory texts (prefaces, prologues and *dramatis personae*), regularly formed the first gathering of the book—the text of the comedy beginning at signature B—, which suggests that the composition usually started before the playwright collected the material (Mora 18n36).

The majority of dedications were signed by the playwrights themselves, either with their full names or initials.<sup>26</sup> However, when the comedy was printed posthumously, the person who brought the text to the press might take the opportunity to offer it to a patron (Gómez-Lara 23).<sup>27</sup> For the most part, dedicatees were members of the aristocracy, which reveals that the influence of the court was highly significant in the first decades of the Restoration period (Gómez-Lara 23; Mora 19).<sup>28</sup> Indeed, 19 (61%) out of the 31 dedications seeking patronage of the plays printed between 1671 and 1682 were addressed to members of the court, including the royal family, the king's mistresses and his illegitimate son (the duke of Grafton), and the so-called Court Wits (Mora 19). Another revealing detail is the influence Catholic circles retain in the 1660s: 7 out of the 19 dedications (36.8%) were addressed to Catholics (Gómez-Lara 24). As for the format, Mora pointed out a tendency towards greater elaboration and wordiness: most dedications in the first decade did not surpass one or two pages, while the average length in the period 1671-1682 was three (Mora 19).

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<sup>25</sup> Exceptions are Tatham's *The Rump*, whose dedication was included in the second edition (1661), Tuke's *The Adventures of Five Hours* (the dedication was replaced by an epistle "To the reader" in the edition of 1671); Etherege's *The Comical Revenge* and Shadwell's *The Miser*, in which the title of the dedicatee, Charles Sackville, was changed from "Lord Buckhurst" to "Earl of Dorset and Middlesex."

<sup>26</sup> Exceptionally, authors could use a pseudonym (the only case in those years was Wycherley's last play, subscribed by "The Plain-Dealer").

<sup>27</sup> For instance, the folio edition of Davenant's plays, published in 1673, was dedicated by his widow to the duke of York; Nahum Tate brought about the publication of Roger Boyle's *Guzman* in 1693 and dedicated to the earl's grandson, Lionel Boyle.

<sup>28</sup> The exceptions were Walter James (Tatham's *The Rump*), Alice Barret (Thomson's *The English Rogue*), the actress and royal mistress Nell Gwynn (Behn's *The Feigned Courtesans*), and the bookseller Richard Bentley (Otway's *The Soldier's Fortune*).

As Mora pointed out, a dedicatory epistle was conceived and devised as “a tribute to a patron whose favour the author courts and whose prestige and influence might shield his work from censure” (Gómez-Lara 22). Other than protection, playwrights hoped for remuneration, social advancement and recognition which might advance their careers (Gómez-Lara 22). These purposes dictate the themes most commonly found in the epistles: acknowledgement of obligations and expressions of gratitude, praise of the patron and request for protection (Gómez-Lara 22; Mora 20-21). Since praise was typically hyperbolic, authors attempted to counterbalance the likely accusations of flattery by commenting on the excesses of the genre. References to the circumstances of composition and production of the play abounded, particularly when the patron had provided assistance or encouragement (such as reading the text, correcting and revising it, or attending several performances). Moreover, when the audience had received the comedy favourably, this was highlighted as a means to enhance the value of the tribute (Mora 21). Nevertheless, unsuccessful comedies were also dedicated and authors whose works were generally well received could argue that the failure of their plays was unjustified and adduce extenuating circumstances (Mora 21). Comments on the censure and malice of critics and rivals were also frequent and provide evidence of the wars between poets in the 1670s and of political partisanship during the Exclusion Crisis (Mora 21). With respect to the style, due to the higher social rank of the dedicatees, the tone of the epistles extended from the deferential to the obsequious, the author adopting as a rule a humble stance (Mora 22). However, playwrights could break or flout the conventions when they attempted to exhibit wit and originality (Mora 22).

As this discussion of previous studies on patronage has shown, the reduction of patronage to a mere economic phenomenon has proven to be incomplete. Authors not only attempted to seek financial support from patrons, but also social recognition and renown. Recent scholarship has benefitted from the application of interdisciplinary approaches, particularly Bourdieu’s sociology of culture. As Payne, Griffin and McCabe rightfully pointed out, a rigorous evaluation of the system of dramatic patronage under the later Stuarts—and the dedicatory epistles that helped articulate it—needs to be carried out from the perspective of gift-exchange theories.



### **3. New historicism, gift-exchanges and symbolic capital in dedications of plays.**

The study of dedications has been traditionally constrained by an anachronistic assumption that their chief purpose was to seek financial support from patrons. The reason for this misapprehension was the underlying assumption that the crown and the aristocracy had no longer the resources to encourage and fund the arts in a direct and effective manner. Nevertheless, more recent research has shown that a comprehensive understanding of patronage cannot be based exclusively on its monetary dimension, for this conception derives from a post-capitalist, erroneous interpretation of the phenomenon. In order to provide an accurate assessment of Restoration patronage and dedications, a different approach is needed. Following Payne, Griffin and McCabe, dramatic dedications should be analysed under the scope of Pierre Bourdieu's anthropological and sociocultural methodology, gift-exchange theories and new historicism.

#### **3.1. New historicism and the study of dedications**

New historicism emerged in the early 1980s with the purpose of interpreting literary texts in relation to the complexities of their own historical context.<sup>1</sup> Its founding critics draw upon diverse approaches in critical theory, cultural history and social anthropology in order to navigate the boundaries between literature and history. New historicism studies the complex cultural, textual and political forces which intervene between past and present. The central problem has to do with the difficulty in interpreting past phenomena without falling into anachronism. New historicism aims at construing the meaning of the past while respecting its differences, by recognizing that discourses work powerfully in cultural history beyond the particular moment of their articulation (Salkeld 70). Theorists need to consider the inequities harboured in those discourses in order to apprehend the literary text in its original historical context with the highest possible degree of objectivity.

Within this theoretical framework, I intend to analyse dedications under the scope of cultural economy. As David Throsby has rightly pointed out, cultural

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<sup>1</sup> The term 'new historicism' was coined by Stephen Greenblatt to characterise a collection of Renaissance essays he had edited: *The Power of Forms in the English Renaissance* (Pilgrim Books, 1982).

processes, such as the dedication of plays, can be examined as part of an economic environment and can themselves be interpreted in economic terms (10). Any activity involving the production or consumption of cultural goods within an economic system involves economic transactions (Throsby 12).<sup>2</sup> However, these economic transactions are not always based on the exchange of economic capital, but rather symbolic capital, which is a property that the agents participating in the transaction recognise and value. Value has to do with utility, price and the worth that individuals or markets assign to commodities (Throsby 19). However, in the case of cultural economy, value can be best understood as an indication of merit or worth (Throsby 20).<sup>3</sup>

Symbolic capital can be also referred to as ‘cultural capital,’ which is a fourth type of capital, clearly distinguishable from physical capital (that is, the stock of real goods), human capital (the skills and experience in people which represent a capital stock) and natural capital (the stock of renewable and non-renewable resources provided by nature). As Throsby has shown, cultural capital can be tangible, occurring as cultural products or goods, or intangible, which take the form of ideas, practices, beliefs and values which are shared by a group (46). The cultural capital owned by different individuals and groups can be measured and compared by using methods that originate in a cultural discourse, even though it might borrow concepts and ideas from economy studies, as long as the specificity of cultural transactions is taken into account. For this reason, I argue that dedications should be studied as a gift-exchange practice.

Gift exchange first became a topic of inquiry in anthropology with Marcel Mauss’s influential *Essai sur le don* (1924). In the past decades, philosophers, literary critics and theorists have joined the theoretical discussion of gift exchange. According to Mauss, both the reception and the reciprocal return of the gift are governed by well-articulated social rules. Claude Lévi-Strauss pointed out that the importance of Mauss’s

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<sup>2</sup> Throsby defines cultural goods (which include artistic goods) by three characteristics: creativity is involved in their production, they generate and communicate symbolic meaning and they are potentially intellectual property (4). McCain considers that cultural goods do not need to meet the three criteria to be considered as such (155).

<sup>3</sup> McCain argues that value in art and culture is not non-economic, but rather artistic or aesthetic in the first case and cultural in the second. He adds that non-economic values are “intrinsic or objective in the sense that they are independent of individual preferences,” as opposed to economic values which “are derived from the preferences of individuals” (150).

work lay precisely in this attempt to explain empirically observed behaviour in terms of a society's unconscious rules of exchange (Schrift, "Introduction" 8). Bourdieu connected gift exchange to the economy of symbolic goods and argued that these activities transformed the nature of interest relations imposed by kinship into elective relations of reciprocity and turned arbitrary relations of exploitation into durable relations grounded in nature ("Selections" 204). This capacity to legitimise the arbitrary is particularly relevant in asymmetrical power relationships ("Selections" 216), such as in dedicatory writing, for patrons generally occupy higher ranks within society than authors.<sup>4</sup>

In the light of gift-exchange theories and the notion of symbolic capital, I argue that literary patronage during the reigns of the late Stuarts was based on a conglomerate of cultural and economic practices that can only be fully understood under a pre-capitalist perspective. In this manner, the practice of dedications might be fully apprehended without the distortions introduced by anachronistic assumptions and, in doing so, this work places itself within the framework of New historicism studies.

### **3.2 Pierre Bourdieu, symbolic capital and dedications**

French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu put forward a theoretical model that attempts to explain culture, its processes and products by placing them in their social context. In his seminal work, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977), Bourdieu studied gift-exchange practices in archaic economies and stressed that these operate according to a broader definition of economic interest.<sup>5</sup> As Bourdieu shows, reducing economic interest to its pecuniary dimension is an effect of capitalism (*Outline* 177). The notion of capital, which makes up the core of his theories on culture and economy, can be defined as "a collection of goods and skills, of knowledge and acknowledgements, belonging to an individual or a group that he or she can mobilize to develop influence,

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<sup>4</sup> McCabe argued that both patrons and authors aimed at defining patronage in "mutually advantageous terms, typically involving altruism and beneficence on the one part and worthiness and gratitude on the other" (15). For instance, authors tend to define patronage in affective terms, presenting themselves as friends rather than clients.

<sup>5</sup> Bourdieu distinguishes between archaic economies, whose function is to limit and hide economic interests and are characteristic of pre-capitalist societies, and a capitalist economy, in which money-based exchanges are the norm.

gain power, or bargain other elements of this collection” (Neveu 347). In “The Forms of Capital” (1986), Bourdieu distinguishes three different kinds: economic (material wealth), cultural (knowledge and skills acquired through socialisation or education) and social (membership in a group). All of these can lead to the construction of symbolic capital, which can be defined as the symbolic representation of another form of capital.

Dedications need to be understood as a social practice, which was regulated by a set of norms. The offering of a play through the inclusion of a dedication has to be interpreted as a form of gift-exchange: authors offer their plays to influential patrons and expect a different gift in return. As Bourdieu pointed out, the exchange of gifts receives its meaning from the response it produces, that is, the acceptance or rejection of the gift. Most dedications were accepted, especially because permission was needed before presenting a play, although this custom was apparently not always followed, since some authors apologise for not having done so. For the most part, dedications were met with appreciation, for they certainly increased the symbolic capital of the dedicatee. Patrons showed their gratitude through an economic reward, which ranged between £5 and £10.<sup>6</sup>

To fully grasp the economy of gift-exchange, we need to adopt a larger definition of economic interest, one which surpasses the limits of capitalism. These transactions are based on different forms of capital. In fact, Bourdieu demonstrates that in pre-capitalist societies, economic and symbolic capitals are to a large extent interchangeable (*Outline* 178).<sup>7</sup> In the context of dramatic dedications, the prestige and renown attached to a noble family and a name (which is displayed in the headings of dedications and even sometimes in title-pages) can be readily convertible into material wealth by boosting the sale of copies, increasing the prestige of the author and the box-office receipts.

The exchange of gifts cannot be reduced to a simple exchange of goods, because the capital that is transacted is not only economic but also symbolic: what is at stake in

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<sup>6</sup> Alexander Beljame provided this quantity based on the fact that Dryden made from a play £100 at best (121).

<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, the conversion of capital, which is the main condition of its efficacy, is in no way automatic (Bourdieu, “Selections” 218).

gift-exchange is not the economic value of the gift, but the recognition of the honour of the receiver which the gift implies.<sup>8</sup> Bourdieu argues for extending economic calculation to “*all* the goods, material and symbolic, without distinction, that present themselves as being *rare* and worth of being sought after in a particular social formation” (178). These symbolic goods may include smiles, handshakes, compliments, challenges and so forth.<sup>9</sup>

In Restoration England, authors belonging to the gentry or commonalty relied on the protection of court favourites, to whom they dedicated their works. They likewise approached influential ladies, who also acted as brokers of patronage. Many playwrights did not have the connections to offer their works to members of the nobility and therefore sought the protection of other members of the community, with whom they were acquainted. Conversely, authors belonging to the higher ranks of the nobility, such as the earl of Orrery or the duke of Newcastle, did not dedicate their works, for they already occupied positions of honour. Whereas in Charles II’s reign patronage of the theatre was practically monopolised by the court and the aristocracy (indeed, the dedications to members of the royal family and the nobility constitute the largest group), after the accession of William and Mary, a series of influential statesmen (Charles Montague, earl of Halifax, John, Baron Somers, and Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset) developed a tradition of aristocratic patronage of Whig writers.<sup>10</sup> Politicians took an interest in writers, because they could use them as instruments of propaganda; in return, they provided these writers with official positions, which allowed them to live comfortably.

Gifts and, similarly, dedications provide patrons with an opportunity to display their greatness, for they imply a challenge to which the receiver is expected to

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<sup>8</sup> Gregory introduced a difference between commodity and gift exchange: “commodity exchange establishes objective quantitative relationships between the objects transacted, while gift exchange establishes personal qualitative relationships between the subjects transacting” (41). The value of the gift is determined by the agents participating in the transaction, according to a set of personal criteria.

<sup>9</sup> Pepys was very pleased whenever the duke of York recognised him: “Here the King and Duke came to see their fowle play. The Duke took very civil notice of me” (3: 47, 16 March 1662).

<sup>10</sup> These changes in the system were possible because of the financial restructuring carried out under the Williamite regime to fund his military campaigns in the Continent and the activities of the Whig Kit-Cat Club (A. Williams, *Patronage* 149, 155).

respond.<sup>11</sup> According to Bourdieu, “to make someone a challenge is to credit him with the dignity of a man [or woman] of honour, since the challenge, as such, requires a riposte and therefore is addressed to a man [or woman] deemed capable of playing the game of honour, and of playing it well” (*Outline* 11). As a result, being chosen as the dedicatee of a play represents a great honour, for it implies that the person in question is considered to be worthy and capable of exerting influence; it is a public acknowledgement of one’s symbolic and social capital.

Conversely, the giver of the gift needs to be considered equally honourable, otherwise his or her gift lacks value: “only a challenge coming from an equal in honour deserves to be taken up” (12). For this reason, dedications would be offered when dramatists had accumulated a certain amount of symbolic capital (through the favourable reception of their plays), in order to constitute a veritable gift and an acknowledgement of the dedicatee’s capital. This explains, for instance, why at the beginning of her career Aphra Behn had four plays staged and none of these was dedicated. Only when she produced a successful one (*The Town Fop*), she could offer it to a patroness in exchange for support and protection.<sup>12</sup>

Despite the fact that the receiver of a dedication would only truly benefit from this gift if the playwright was well-known or if the play had been applauded on stage, plays could also be dedicated even when they had not met with a favourable reception from the audience. In those cases, the author would resort to the dedication as his or her last chance to compensate for a failure on stage, by blaming it on the poor performance of the acting crew or on rivals and detractors.

A fundamental aspect of gift-exchanges is the importance attributed to the form of the exchange: “the *presentation*, the manner of giving, must be such that the outward

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<sup>11</sup> Mauss used the term ‘*Hau*’ to refer to “the force in the gift that obligates the receiver to reciprocate” (Schrift, “Introduction” 9). The reciprocity of gifts can also be shown in “the typically symbolic form of gratitude, homage, respect, obligations or moral debts” (Bourdieu, “Selections” 215).

<sup>12</sup> In fact, in her first dedicated play, *The Feign’d Curtizans* (1679) Behn apologises to her patroness, Eleanor Gwyn, for not having paid her tribute sooner. It is worth mentioning that her choice of patroness was not particularly risky (which again suggests that she was uncertain about her own symbolic capital), since her dedicatee was a former actress, that is, someone with less honour than a noblewoman, even though Gwyn was Charles II’s mistress and a celebrity.

forms of the act present a practical denial of the content of the act, symbolically transmuting an interested exchange or a simple power relation into a relationship set up in the due form for form's sake, i.e. inspired by pure respect for the customs and conventions recognised by the group" (194). That is, given its convertibility into economic capital, symbolic capital is a "disguised" form of economic capital, which "conceals the fact that it originates in 'material' forms of capital which are also . . . the source of its effects" (*Outline* 183). The offering of the gift, the dedication of the play needs to be performed and perceived as a disinterested act, and therefore there should be no mention of any expectation of a gift in return. In fact, the references to the favours that dramatists expect to receive from their patrons need to be very subtle. For instance, Thomas Shadwell mentions the Newcastle's estate in a very casual manner in the dedication of *The Humorists* to Margaret Cavendish. Nor was it acceptable to comment on the wealth of patrons, which would have turned the gift into a commercial exchange; the author can only refer to their generosity, since the emphasis should always be on their personality and other qualities.

Regarding the notion of honour, Bourdieu defines it as "a disposition inculcated in the earliest years of life and constantly reinforced by calls to order from the group, that is to say, from the aggregate of the individuals endowed with the same dispositions, to whom each is linked by his dispositions and interests" (*Outline* 15). That is, people of honour, in this case members of the aristocracy, are educated as if they possessed an intrinsic set of qualities which render them superior to the commonalty and, throughout their lives, they are presented with a set of opportunities (and challenges) to show this greatness, so that their identity is reinforced.<sup>13</sup> Dispositions are inscribed in schemes of thought and they enable each individual to create all the practices in a manner that is consistent with the logic of challenge and riposte (*Outline* 15). Honour, among other qualities, is what defines the personality and behaviour of the nobility and gentry, and their sense of honour is what differentiates them from the commonalty. Wealth does not function as the defining feature of the aristocracy: their material possessions make them rich and allow them to display their singularity, but what distinguishes them from the

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<sup>13</sup> Moreover, the aristocracy is thought to be endowed with natural taste, that is, their aesthetic dispositions are not the result of a formal education, but are somehow ingrained in their essence (Bourdieu, *Distinction* 68).

rest of society and defines them as a separate class is their sense of honour. Honour cannot be purchased with economic capital.

Moreover, the patrimony of an aristocratic family includes not only their estate, but also their kin and clientele, the network of alliances and relationships, which represents “a heritage of commitments and debts of honour, a capital of rights and duties built up in the course of successive generations and providing an additional source of strength” (*Outline* 178). Patrons possess a valuable circle of connections, formed by people whom they have previously favoured and who are committed to serve them in return. These debts of honour would be employed to satisfy any exceptional needs for economic or symbolic good and services, most generally in circumstances of economic or political crisis, which would require the assistance of a larger group of people (*Outline* 178-9). In the context of dramatic dedications, patrons might be connected to theatre managers and publishers, whom they might encourage to favour their clients.

### **The practice of dedications and the habitus**

Dedications cannot be understood as a practice fully governed by a set of fixed and rigid rules of behaviour. Bourdieu argues that that social behaviour is not controlled by socially shared rules, for this conception would imply that in any given circumstance individuals would apprehend the situation, recognise the rule and act suitably. For Bourdieu, rules cannot determine an individual’s actions because these rules and the situations in which they apply always require active interpretation. On the contrary, he stresses that rules and norms provide interpretive resources for strategic action and that individuals engage in what he describes as “the ‘art’ of necessary improvisation” (*Outline* 8). That is, even though the practice of dedications is implicitly regulated by unwritten rules based on tradition (such as, the need of asking for permission, the praise of the dedicatee, the subtle request of patronage, etc.), authors are not forced to follow all these conventions. In fact, depending on the symbolic



capital which they have accumulated, together with their social capital, some of them could flout conventions.<sup>14</sup>

The rules of dedicatory writing are set by the habitus.<sup>15</sup> This is a concept that Bourdieu uses to refer to a system of dispositions, tendencies or inclinations, which enable agents to cope with ever-changing situations. The habitus is the result of history and explains individual and collective practices, in conformity with the schemes induced by history (*Outline* 82). The dispositions are the different options available in any given situation and constitute the basis for the agents' behaviour. The habitus contributes to the production and reproduction of the existing social order without individuals' conscious awareness, even though the habitus exists only through the actions of those individuals. The dispositions are the responses which have been given to specific situations in the past; they survive in the present and permeate the future, exerting a principle of continuity and regularity, but also allow room for transforming social behaviour (*Outline* 82).

Therefore, in some cases, the responses of the habitus are not automatic nor based on tradition, but are strategically calculated by means of an estimation of the varied dispositions available in a given situation (*Outline* 76). These responses are chosen in relation to "a system of potentialities, immediately inscribed in the present," not in the past or the future (*Outline* 76). The plausibility of success is assessed by making use of "a whole body of wisdom, sayings, commonplaces, ethical precepts," together with the principles of the ethos, which unconsciously control 'reasonable' and 'unreasonable' behaviour (77). Writers are inclined, by their social capital and habitus, to adopt certain dispositions and to avoid others, and this is reflected in their use of the convention.

The convention and rhetoric of dedicatory writing are therefore regulated by a set of norms, which have been established by tradition. In most cases, these rules will

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<sup>14</sup> This was the case of the Court Wits Sedley, in his dedication to *The Mulberry-Garden* (1668), and Wycherley, in *The Plain-Dealer* (1677).

<sup>15</sup> The habitus captures the ways in which the structures of society become fixed norms or "trained capacities and patterned propensities to think, feel, and act in determinate ways," which in turn guide people in their creative responses to the constraints of their milieu (Wacquant 529).

be automatically applied, as an unconscious form of behaviour which is considered acceptable in a given situation. However, the disposition that an author chooses can also be strategically calculated, depending on the specificity of the circumstances. This is what makes possible the transformation of the habitus, the use of a different rhetoric in dedications. A number of dramatists, who possessed large symbolic and social capital, were able to disregard conventions and instead adopt a different tone when addressing their dedicatees. In doing so, they were creating new dispositions that others could use when offering their works and, indeed, their originally unusual behaviour became an acceptable disposition, as long as a set of conditions were met.<sup>16</sup>

### **The field of literature and the field of power**

An asset of Bourdieu's approach was his refusal to place literature in an autonomous sphere, without considering its relation with the social and historical context. Bourdieu's theories stress the interactions between social structures and literature (and their mutual influence), through the concepts of field and habitus.<sup>17</sup> Bourdieu's comprehensive analysis of literature operates on three levels: the first pertains to the position of the literary field in the field of power; the second considers the position of individuals, groups and institutions in the literary field; and the third traces the formation of agents' habitus and their positions (*Rules* 214). Given that in dedicatory epistles two agents participate (the writer and the dedicatee), attention will be paid to their positions in the field of power by looking at the reception of their works and dramatic careers in the case of authors and by looking at the patronesses' status and family background. Author and patron are the two inseparable sides of the same coin and therefore a thorough study of patronage should deal with both of them.

Bourdieu defines the field of power as "the space of relations of force between agents or between institutions having in common the possession of the capital

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<sup>16</sup> For instance, authors like Duffett or Thompson imitated some of the features of the rakish tone when addressing their dedicatees. While showing humility and respect for their patronesses, they do flout some of the conventions of the genre with comic or parodic intention, which allows them to use this disposition, despite their lack of a large symbolic capital.

<sup>17</sup> Bourdieu applied the concept of "field" to different domains: the "field of production," and the "field of consumption," the "field of the dominant class," the "field of power," the "field of literature," etc.

necessary to occupy the dominant positions in different fields (notably economic or cultural)” (*Rules* 215). The field is therefore divided between competing factions or “holders of different powers,” whose aim is to transform or preserve the relative value of the different forms of capital (*Rules* 215). In the context of Restoration England, particularly in the realm of the theatre, the field of power would be represented by the successive monarchs and their courts, statesmen and leading politicians (and their immediate family), theatre managers, the principal actors and bookseller-publishers. Regarding the struggle between the competing factions, these could be identified with conflicts between coteries and political schemes, the rush for power, rivalries between companies or the acting crew, conflicts between managers and actors or the competition to gain the publication rights of a successful play between publishers.

As for the field of literature, this is similarly marked by forces and struggles, aimed at either transforming or maintaining its main features (“The Field” 312). Therefore, the struggle is both the generative and unifying principle of the field (*Rules* 232). The field of literature can be understood as a network of objective relations between positions: each position is defined by its relation with other positions, in accordance with the relevant properties which allow it to be situated in relation to the others (*Rules* 231). To each position corresponds a homologous position-taking, that is, a choice made in the most diverse domains, which include literary works as well as political discourse, pamphlets, polemics, etc. The space of literary position-takings is regulated by the possession of a determinate quantity of specific capital (recognition) and, at the same time, by the determinate position occupied in the structure of the distribution of this specific capital (“The Field” 312). This implies, for instance, that different theatres and publishers are available, and each of these is associated with different interests and amounts of capital.<sup>18</sup> For example, Deborah Payne has shown that prior to 1679 Aphra Behn was most frequently published by James Magnes, Thomas Dring and other booksellers, who specialised in low-cost items; however, after

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<sup>18</sup> Regarding theatre companies, at certain times only one was available: the United Company, which resulted from the fusion of the Duke’s and the King’s, operated between 1682 and 1694, although it came to be known as Rich’s Company from 1693. In 1695, the actor Thomas Betterton created a collaborative company together with other actors, which staged plays until 1705.

she secured the support of powerful patrons (such as the duke of York, the duke of Grafton and the earl of Arundel), she began publishing with the ambitious Tonson brothers (“Aphra Behn” 109).

The definition of the field of literature as a network of struggling positions and position-takings is relevant for the study of dedications, since it contributes to the analysis of the position that dramatist held at a specific stage of their careers and the manner in which this influenced the rhetoric of their dedications. The interest in considering positions and position-takings resides in the capital and power associated with each one of these positions, for symbolic capital was one of the most determining elements when choosing both the addressee and the rhetoric of a dedication.

The field of literature is a challenge to the economy, since it “presents itself as an inverted economic world: those who enter it have an interest in disinterestedness” (216). The support which certain patrons offered to dramatists could spring out of a genuine interest in literature. Nevertheless, as Bourdieu pointed out, disinterested economic conditions could grant access to symbolic profit and this were capable of being converted, sooner or later, into economic profit. For instance, the approval of influential patrons could attract more spectators while the play was being staged, prompting an increase in box-office receipts and, consequently, a larger remuneration for its author, if these coincided with the third-day benefit, or even attracting spectators to his future productions.<sup>19</sup>

Bourdieu establishes a close relation between the field of power and the field of literature: “because of the hierarchy established in the relations among the different kinds of capital and among their holders, the fields of cultural production occupy a dominated position, temporally, within the field of power” (*Rules of Art* 216). In fact, during the Restoration theatrical activity was dependent on royal patents, which could, in theory, be cancelled or transferred to someone else.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, despite their

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<sup>19</sup> This was, for instance, the case of Etherege, who dedicated his first play, *The Comical Revenge* (1664), to Charles Sackville, and when he premièred his second, *She Would if She Could* (1668) his previous success, together with Sackville’s support, attracted a large audience.

<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, permission was necessary in order to carry out any theatrical activity. Betterton and his associates had to request a licence to form a new company and act. See Van Lennep 443.

relative autonomy, the fields of cultural production and the field of literature are subjects to constraints and demands, particularly the need for profit (*Rules of Art* 216). Indeed, the Restoration stage cannot be thought of as a disinterested world, for producing a play was a rather risky enterprise and the theatre, as any other business, was regulated by the law of the market: plays appealing to a larger audience were produced and restaged over and over, while unsuccessful plays were quickly cancelled, as well as plays which seemed offensive to influential people.

The fact that some dramatists did not stage their works and only published them was not usually a personal choice but the result of different circumstances, sometimes political (the play was banned for being considered disruptive), and therefore these plays generally include a preface or a dedication in which authors complained about the unjust treatment given to their works. Some examples of plays which were premiered and banned (at least temporarily) during the years marked by the tension created by the Popish Plot and the Exclusion Crisis (1678-1682) are Crowne's *Henry VI*, Lee's *Lucius Junius Brutus*, Tate's *Richard II*, Dryden and Lee's *The Duke of Guise*, and Crowne's *The City Politiques* (Van Lennep xxix). All of them included a dedication alluding to the circumstances of the prohibition, except for Crowne's *The City Politiques* which contained a preface to the reader.

In "The Field of Cultural Production" (1983), Bourdieu specifies that what is at issue is "the power to impose the dominant definition of the writer and therefore to delimit the population of those entitled to take part in the struggle to define the writer" (323). In the realm of Restoration theatre, Dryden became the leading critical voice of his day in his prefaces and particularly in the dedications (e.g. Dedication to *Mr Limberham*), in which he defended his conception of drama and literature. This caused the laureate poet to be mocked and parodied in several texts, such as Buckingham's *The Rehearsal* (1670), in which Dryden is ridiculed as the conceited dramatist Mr Bayes. Dryden engaged in a substantial debate with Shadwell, who held different opinions on heroic drama and Ben Jonson as a model for contemporary writers. Shadwell viewed Jonson's plays as an unchanging paradigm of comic art and favoured the genre of the comedy of humours with a moralizing purpose; Dryden, on the contrary, argued for a modern poetics through the revision of past writers and

rejected any attempt of making comedy morally elevating (Hammond, *John Dryden* 75).<sup>21</sup>

As Bourdieu explains, the state of the power relations between the forces in this struggle (theatre managers and playwrights) depends on the autonomy of the field (drama), that is, the extent to which its own norms are capable of exerting control over the producers of cultural products, including those who occupy a dominant position in the field or aspire to occupy it. These producers are the closest to the dominant pole of the field of power and therefore the most responsive to external demands (*Rules* 217). Therefore, the autonomy of the field of the theatre relied on its capacity to impose norms on successful playwrights and aspiring ones, who were in a similar way to those occupying analogous positions in the field of power, such as courtiers and those striving to gain an office at court.

In *The Rules of Art* (1996), Bourdieu also introduces two relevant concepts: the principle of external hierarchisation and the principle of internal hierarchisation. According to the first, success is measured by commercial indicators (for instance, the number of runs, the box-office receipts, the number of editions and reprints, etc.) or social acclaim; hence, renowned playwrights (or artists in general) are those appreciated and admired by the public (217). On the other hand, the second principle favours dramatists who are recognised by their peers and who owe their status and authority to the fact that they do not yield to the demands of the general public (217). In the context of Restoration theatre, these authors were Sir Charles Sedley, William

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<sup>21</sup> In the preface to *An Evening's Love* (1671), Dryden took a stand in opposition to Shadwell and the comedy of humours, arguing that "Johnson was the only man of all Ages and Nations who has perform'd it well; and that but in three or four of his Comedies; . . . the same humours a little vary'd and written worse: neither was it more allowable in him, that it is in our Poets, to represent the follies of particular persons; of which many have accus'd him" (204). By contending that his opponents had failed in writing comedies of humour, Dryden was responding to Shadwell's preface to *The Sullen Lovers*, in which he had attacked the new witty heroes and heroines.

Wycherley (particularly in his dedication to *The Plain-Dealer*), Roger Boyle, earl of Orrery, or even Margaret Cavendish.<sup>22</sup>

For Bourdieu, and for the Restoration stage, the size of the audience provides the most reliable indicator of the position that an author occupies in the field (*Rules* 218). However, the lack of extant documents providing information on audiences hinders our task. As a result, other materials become necessary for this assessment, such as contemporary comments on the premiere or a performance, the number of runs (when available), whether the play became part of the company's repertoire or not, the number of editions and reprints and, most importantly, the manner in which authors referred to their works in the dedications. Moreover, Bourdieu contends that heteronomy in the field is the result of demand, either made by a patron or a sponsor (and there were several plays written by request during the Restoration) or by the expectations of the market (*Rules* 218).<sup>23</sup> In relation to this, cultural producers (dramatists) were sharply divided according to their relation with commercial success, which "is rejected by the defenders of an autonomous principle of hierarchisation as evidence of a mercenary interest in economic and political profits" (218).

Furthermore, Bourdieu claims that, other than this first hierarchy which is sustained by success on the stage and in the economy, there is a second hierarchy which depends on the social qualities of the audience and the symbolic capital which is conferred to authors through public recognition. For instance, in their dedications

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<sup>22</sup> For instance, Langaine lavishly heaped praise on Margaret Cavendish, his opinion of her works being certainly influenced by her rank: "I shall not presume to pass my Judgment on the Writings of this Admirable Dutchess; but rather imitate the Carriage of Julius Scalinger, to the Roman Sulpitia; by concluding with him *Igitur ut tam laudibilis Heroinae Ratio habeatur, non ausim objicere ei judicii severitatem*. I know there are some that have but a mean Opinion of her Plays; but if it be consider'd that both the Language and Plots of them are all her own: I think she ought with Justice to be preferr'd to others of her Sex, which have built their Fame on other People's Foundations: sure I am, that whoever will consider well the several Epistles before her Books, and the General Prologue to all her Plays, if he have any spark of Generosity, or Good Breeding, will be favourable in his Censure" (390-391).

<sup>23</sup> King Charles had a taste for French tragedy and asked Roger Boyle to write English versions of French tragedies, such as *The General* (1664) and *The History of Henry the Fifth* (1664). The monarch is also said to have proposed to Samuel Tuke the adaptation of Antonio Coello's *Los Empeños de seis horas* (1657). *The Adventure of Five Hours* (1663) became a major success and exerted a great influence on Restoration plays, like Dryden's *Sir Martin Mar-all* (1668). Also, according to Dennis, Crowne wrote *Sir Courtly Nice* (1685) at the command of Charles II after he had asked for some office, however, the monarch died before the play's premiere (II: 405).

Restoration playwrights frequently comment on the acclaim and support that they received from members of the court or from King Charles himself (the most assiduous theatregoer of all the late Stuart monarchs). Given that wit and taste were at the time considered the prerogative of noble birth and that the monarch was very fond of drama playwriting became the preferred medium for displaying both.<sup>24</sup>

In the field of literature, the dominant positions include consecrated authors, who have made a name for themselves already and are also capable of imposing themselves beyond the field, since their growing reputation attracts a wider audience. This is the case of Sir Charles Sedley, whose first solo comedy, *The Mulberry-Garden* (1668), aroused great expectation among spectators; being a member of the king's circle, Sedley was able to exert influence beyond the realm of the theatre. The dominant positions are also formed by authors who meet the demands of the dominant faction of the general public (the affluent and highly educated audience). Contrarily, the dominated factions are represented by popular authors, who are discredited for addressing the mass market and a lower-class audience. Also, within the dominated faction are new authors, who attempt to challenge the consecrated ones, for the sake of novelty or independence. The dominated position also comprises authors who have failed, generally those who remain faithful to a declining or unsuccessful position.

Bourdieu adds that the degree of autonomy of the field of literature depends on the value which the specific capital of writers constitutes for the dominant groups, both in the struggle to preserve the established order and, more importantly, in the struggle between the fractions striving for domination within the field of power (bourgeoisie versus aristocracy, old aristocracy versus new aristocracy, etc.), as well as in the production and reproduction of economic capital ("The Field" 322). Moreover, the autonomy of the field is also connected to the symbolic capital accumulated by the successive generations of writers; this collective capital gives writers the power to ignore or flout the demands of the market and even to oppose them on the grounds of their own principles and norms (*Rules* 221).

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<sup>24</sup> In the Restoration, taste was considered to be brought to excellence by one class: the landed gentry. The reason was that members of this class had the means to develop their sense of taste for the beautiful and, more importantly, they could afford disinterested contemplation (Hutter and Shusterman 175).



Regarding the autonomy of the field of literature and theatre in Restoration England, it should be noted that scholars have traditionally ascribed playwrights a submissive position based on the existence of dedications and other prefatory material in which they asked for favours or complained about their economic situation. In the case of dedications, the praise of the patron has generally been interpreted as an instance of the author's dependence on the patronage system, almost as a sign of servility. However, praise in dedications was at the time considered as an expected and customary element which would bring recognition to authors, given their association with such an eminent person. Writers, particularly playwrights, were dependent on the support of the great and powerful, especially during the first stages of their careers (when, in most cases, they are least endowed with specific capital), for instance, in order to persuade the theatre managers to produce their plays or to attract spectators to the playhouse. In addition, the Restoration stage functioned on the basis of box-office receipts and, as a result, only successful plays remained on the stage and were included in the repertoire. Aspiring professional playwrights had to adjust to the demands of spectators if they wanted their works to be staged; for this reason, they repeated situations, characters and schemes which had proved appealing to the general audience. Nevertheless, this by no means implies that they lacked the space for creativity or artistic freedom.

Moreover, according to Bourdieu, the value of a literary work is not merely created by the writer but by the field of production: literary works do not exist as symbolic objects endowed with value, at least not until they are known and recognised as such by the public—particularly those who have the aesthetic knowledge and capacity to recognise works of literature (*Rules* 229). As a result, all the agents who participate in the production of literary value need to be considered; in Restoration theatre, these included managers, critics, bookseller-publishers, patrons and the political and administrative authorities involved (for example, the Lord Chamberlain and the Master of the Revels).

## **Habitus and the constructed trajectory**

According to Bourdieu, biographical events can be understood as placements, investments in the structure and distribution of the different kinds of capital at play in the field, both economic and symbolic (*Rules* 258). The social trajectory of a person can then be defined as “the series of positions successively occupied by the same agent or the same group of agents in successive spaces” (*Rules* 258). These ideas are paramount in relation to the calculation of the symbolic capital ascribed to a patron and an author at a specific time. In the case of the patronesses, biographical events such as marriages, births and, although immensely less frequent, divorces affect their symbolic capital. In the field of literature, displacements towards new positions are circumscribed within a single sector of the field and result in a larger or smaller accumulation of capital; other displacements, however, imply a change in sectors and a conversion of capital (*Rules* 259). An example to illustrate the second type of displacements is the case of genteel amateur playwrights, who cannot write professionally, given their status, but resort to drama to boost their career at court or gain further recognition among peers.

Furthermore, social identity entails a number of possibilities, according to the symbolic capital of the agent. Each person is granted a specific set of legitimate possibilities (or “possibles” in Bourdieu’s terminology), at each given moment in time (*Rules* 260). Social identity also determines a person’s sense of self-importance, which regulates “the space that one may be granted within a group” (*Rules* 261). In the context of Restoration theatre, this notion of social identity partly explains the fact that authors issuing from a middle-class background write commercial drama (D’Urfey, Aphra Behn, Settle), whereas those belonging to the gentry (Wycherley, Sedley, Etherege) opt for genres appealing to their own class. Of course, this tendency is also connected to their education and taste in literature. A person’s taste, or habitus, is originally created within a specific position and is determined by a set of social circumstances. The habitus is how we see ourselves in relation to other people, what brings about our attitudes, not only towards others but also towards cultural products and practices which are potentially available to us. These attitudes are imbued with

social significance and thus the habitus fulfills an important role in influencing a person's trajectory.

The ancestry of authors determines their sense of placement and investment (in Bourdieu's terminology), that is, their integration into a particular social group and awareness of the behaviours expected from them, as well as the specific privileges that they deserve for belonging to a certain social class. This sense of placement and investment also determines their symbolic capital, to which is added the acclaim received upon the public staging of their works. The capacity to opt for the riskier positions and, especially, to hold on to them in the absence of immediate economic profit is more appropriate of those who possess a large economic and symbolic capital (*Rules* 261).<sup>25</sup> Economic capital ensures the living conditions which make it possible to adopt more avant-garde positions, as well as the social confidence and status to look for these.<sup>26</sup> Bourdieu points out that affluent people are generally those who succeed in maintaining themselves in the more uncertain positions long enough to receive the symbolic capital which these provide (*Rules* 261).

In Restoration England, amateur playwrights who belonged to the aristocracy and therefore did not need to rely on the stage for their subsistence were able to write or translate plays as a leisure activity, although they could always expect to enjoy the fruits of the symbolic profit that this activity produce. These gentlemen had money and leisure time to spend, plus they took an interest in the arts, which they sometimes used to further their careers at court. The positions which these authors adopted were not particularly risky or avant-garde, because staging a play was nonetheless expensive and needed to be profitable. However, since they did not depend economically on the success of their plays, they were not forced to produce plays every season. Moreover, these playwrights had already the necessary connections to find a spot in a theatrical venue and to attract spectators.

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<sup>25</sup> Examples of risky positions are Margaret Cavendishes's plays. The trend for closet drama evidently diminished once the theatres were reopened.

<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, aristocrats are characterised by the self-certainty of possessing cultural legitimacy, that is, they are able to impose their aesthetic dispositions as legitimate with ease (Bourdieu, *Distinction* 66).

Conversely, authors issuing from the middle-class were frequently forced to abandon their careers as dramatists for the sake of other activities which were more lucrative. Banks, for instance, resumed his legal career in 1685, after *The Island Queens* was banned from the stage. In most cases, because of their negative sense of placement, writers from the lower classes head for dominant positions or literary tendencies when in need of profit and they also tend to stay in positions which are declining, because their sense of placement prevents them from taking riskier positions (*Rules* 262). However, the notion of trajectory and sense of placement should not be interpreted as a form of determinism. Bourdieu contends that “each agent makes his own future,” by choosing at each moment to continue or to transform the field of literature.

As a result, Restoration dramatists can be divided into two groups in relation to their social capital: the amateur playwrights, who resorted to play-writing as a means to ingratiate themselves with other courtiers and to seek patronage among the nobility; and the group of professional playwrights, who wrote plays to make a living or dedicators participating in the theatre business with a lucrative intention (for instance, theatre managers and impresarios). Of the playwrights considered in this dissertation, the first group comprises Etherege, Wycherley, Sedley, Congreve, Katherine Philips, Anne Wharton, Frances Boothby, Stapylton, Pordage, Dancer, Ecclestone, Cotton and Tuke. The second group includes Dryden, Shadwell, Lee, Otway, Crowne, D’Urfey, Settle, Banks, Behn, Pix, Trotter, de La Roche-Guilhen, Steele, Harris, Rowe, Trapp, Boyer, Heidegger, Hill, Hughes, Swiny, Playford, Johnson, Duffett, Powell, Medbourne, Ambrose Philips, Flecknoe, Thompson, Belon and Cooke.

As for the patronesses addressed in these epistles, their ancestry is also relevant, since authors tend to heap praise on ladies belonging to the highest ranks of the nobility. The aristocracy expects a certain deference when being addressed, especially in public, for this functioned as a mark of class differences. Authors tend to adopt a humbler stance and resort to varied strategies to stress the superiority of the dedicatee. Conversely, when addressing members of the gentry or commoners, the tone is less deferential and playwrights tend to exhibit a closer relation with their dedicatees. Given the substantial differences that the social class of the dedicatee imposes on the author,

the analysis of dedications has been divided into four categories, depending on the social extraction of the patroness: the royal family, the royal mistresses, the nobility, and the gentry and commoners.

### **3.3 Symbolic capital, epideictic rhetoric and the topoi of dedications**

The symbolic capital which authors ascribe to themselves, their works and their patronesses can be assessed by analysing the language of these epistles. The rhetoric of dedications shows evidence of the perceived symbolic capital of the giver and the receiver, which in most cases is judged accurately, but not necessarily.<sup>27</sup> In the case of dramatists, a failed playwright might attempt to compensate for the lack of success of the play, while an over-confident author could also magnify the reception of the work. The rhetoric of dedicatory epistles may disclose the anxiety of an unsuccessful author or the cockiness of a novel playwright and it is sometimes possible to contrast the image that authors want to project in their dedications with contemporary comments on the premiere, the number of performances or editions. Furthermore, regarding the patronesses, authors might exaggerate their qualities or symbolic capital in order to boost the ladies' prestige and thus demonstrate that the dedication could favour the patronesses.

The sequence of the analysis conducted in this study began with the position of the dedicated play in the dramatist's career; next, the reception of the play and the length of its first run were considered; then, the choice of dedicatee and the reasons that might have prompted it were taken into consideration; finally, the contents and tone of the epistle were examined. In doing so, the recurring themes in dedications were identified, catalogued and classified. Following the terminology in rhetoric, I refer to

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<sup>27</sup> The application of the term "rhetoric" to dedicatory writing should not be seen as farfetched: "Every communication is rhetorical because it uses some technique to affect the beliefs, actions, or emotions of an audience" (Kennedy 2). The speaker or writer attempts to fulfill a specific purpose and rhetoric includes the ways of accomplishing that purpose within a given culture. The author of a dedication is pursuing a clear goal: the support of the patroness and recognition by readers. Furthermore, rhetoric also refers to techniques found in discourse, which are aimed at accomplishing the purpose of speaker or writer, but indirectly or at a secondary level. It provides ways of emphasising ideas and showing the author's education, eloquence or skills, in order to make the discourse more acceptable to the addressee (Kennedy 3).

these as ‘dedicatory topoi,’ for this term refers to the conventional themes that orators had recourse to when designing their speeches.

Before delving into the classification of dedicatory topoi, I would like to bring into this discussion a number of ideas regarding the content of dedications. Stanley Archer first identified four conventions of patronage in the dedicatory texts of Restoration drama: request for permission to dedicate the play; praise of the patron; request for protection; and allusion to the expectation of reward. With regards to the praise of the patron, he pointed out that a vast array of qualities were extolled, for instance, birth, family, ancestry, wit, beauty, service to the King and country (10). The praise of dedicatees was almost directly connected with their social status: “the higher the patron in society, the greater the praise” (10). He also noted that a favourite convention of authors was to say that the protagonist was drawn on the patron. Moreover, the nature of the play could influence the tone of the epistle, for example, the dedications of heroic plays were often more extravagant.

Richard McCabe also introduced valuable ideas about the rhetoric of dedications in *‘Ungainefull Arte’: Poetry, Patronage and Print in the Early Modern Era* (2016). He argued that writers were forced to resort to idealised paradigms in an attempt to flatter or shame prospective patrons into a sense of obligation, given the lack of a professional career structure or any formal mode of public recognition (4). As a result, dedications developed their own peculiar rhetoric with recurrent images, tropes and themes, and allowed writers to establish what the ancient rhetoricians termed ‘ethos,’ “an assurance of authorial worthiness designed to cultivate a privileged relationship with both dedicatee and readers” (4). Some of these recurrent tropes were the reference to dedications as gifts, which are invariably unworthy of the recipient; the offering is presented as a ‘token’ of love, service, friendship, respect, or gratitude; author and patron are bound by bonds of affection, kinship, origin, or loyalty; the giver seeks protection, favour or acceptance and relies on the recipient’s grace; this association with the dedicatee will bring lustre to the writer because he or she is the true arbiter of worth; by supporting, protecting, favouring or accepting the author’s offering, the dedicatee acts in the public as well as the private interest; dedicatees are noble,

gentle, benevolent, learned, fair-minded, patriotic, godly or loyal, a credit to their class, court, guild, arms or blood (73).

Dedicatory epistles can be considered as a linguistic genre, in the sense of a text which possesses a specific form, content and use. The form of the dedication retains part of the characteristics of a personal letter, such as the salutation, the closing formula and even sometimes the date; in most cases it is addressed to a single real person (although sometimes it can be directed to a group of people or even a false addressee) and it is generally written in prose, its length varying from a few paragraphs to four or five pages. Dedications display freedom of content, although certain themes and *topoi* are particularly recurring; moreover, the epistles are sometimes very informative of the reception of the play or its composition, contain reflection on literary criticism or comments on political affairs. The primary functions of dedications were the request for patronage and the expression of gratitude for favours received in the past. The request for patronage included protection from rivals or even financial protection, such as a petition to be hosted by the dedicatee, which would be very convenient for a dramatist in economic distress. Given the public nature of dedications, the request for patronage also entailed the recommendation to potential buyers of the play. The dedication functioned as an open testimony of the receiver's approval of the work and support of the playwright and, since the nobility were considered the natural arbiters of taste, dramatists aimed at dedicating their works to aristocrats or at least individuals who exerted influence in the realm of the theatre (such as consecrated playwrights). The expression of gratitude for past favours demonstrated the existence of a personal relation between the author and the dedicatee, which added to the author's symbolic capital. Therefore, the giver insists on any aspect that suggests the support received from the patroness, as a means to display his or her own merit and persuade readers to purchase a copy of the play.

A number of formal features and part of the contents of dedications are inscribed in the classical tradition of epideictic rhetoric. Aristotle first provided a technical definition of this discipline by identifying three branches in rhetoric

epideictic, deliberative or political and judicial.<sup>28</sup> Epideictic rhetoric pertained to public praise or blame, such as funeral orations or panegyrics. Epideictic rhetoric aimed at stimulating the audience to virtue by imitation of the qualities emphasised in the speech and making vice unattractive by using blame. Many of its themes were related to the virtues of the person praised and there was even a prescribed structure to follow when praising individual persons.

After its development in Ancient Greece and Rome through the works of Aristotle and Cicero, epideictic rhetoric became the privileged genre in the Renaissance, given its fundamental role in the public life. In medieval England, subjects needed to express their loyalty and obedience towards the ruling class, which was manifested in elaborate oratorical and poetic demonstrations of praise (Plett 102). This growing complexity regulating social life required the availability of rhetorical manuals providing readers with practical and suitable techniques of persuasion for each professional realm and occasion (Plett 22). One of these manuals was Angel Day's *The English Secretary*, first published in 1586, which enjoyed nine editions by 1635.<sup>29</sup> Dedicatory epistles can be considered a subgenre of request letters. According to Day, authors should begin these texts by praising the addressee, then elaborate on his or her relationship with the writer, as a reason why the request should be granted. After insisting on the fact that the request is honest, lawful and within the power of the addressee, the writer should explain how the request can be carried out and express gratitude for the favour. This structure is closely followed in dedicatory writing. Authors generally begin by introducing the panegyric of the dedicatee and recall the nature of their relation by referring to the previous favours granted by the patroness. They also insist on the need of protection from critics or the general censure of the

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<sup>28</sup> "The final cause of rhetoric as a whole is persuasion to right judgment, action, or belief, but each species of rhetoric has its own final cause: justice in the case of judicial rhetoric; what is advantageous in deliberative rhetoric; what is honorable in epideictic rhetoric" (Kennedy 77).

<sup>29</sup> The art of letter writing originated as part of rhetorical training, but did not receive in-depth treatment until the Middle Ages. Letter writing became a recognised profession and an intrinsic part of education. Other classical manuals include Erasmus's *Brevissima formula* (1520), which provided general advice on letter writing, and his *De conscribendis epistolis* (1534), where he also analyses the classical and the humanistic tradition (Tebeaux 77-78).



theatre to persuade the receiver of the need of patronage. Moreover, they underscore their gratitude to the addressee for accepting the epistle.

Regarding the manner in which the writer needs to address the receiver, Day stresses the importance of recognising the addressee's position, age, and relationship to the writer: "the Comelinesse in deliverance touching the person and cause, seemeth to bee tied unto severall respects: that is, to the reputation of the partie to whome wee write, his condition, age, honour, and dispisition, and to the fittnes of the matter whereof we take upon us to write" (4). Day explains that the receiver's position is measured "according to his dignitie or worthinesse, whereby hee beareth reckoning and place before vs," summarising the appropriate manner of addressing a superior in the following manner: "To our betters, always with submission" (4).

Another relevant category for the study of dedications are "Epistles Commendatorie" (100), in which Day establishes some guidelines for commending the addressee in order to make a request:

Use like circumstances of humilitie and entretie, . . . a necessarie supposall and assurance of their demandes to be hearkened unto, in respect that of their honours, reputations, or credites, it is intended they will require nothing, but that with reasonable toleration may be liked of. But the use of such kinde of directions in choise of both, I rather hold pertinent to the title Comendatorie, . . . in favour eyther of the person or of the cause, may in respect of the honour or reputation of those from whome they come, bee better deemed in sorte of a curteous recommendation, then otherwise by or under anie title of humilitie or submission. (100-101)

Day recommends stressing the author's knowledge of the receiver, so that the praise would be credible, as well as underscoring the love for this person and his family, which might facilitate the granting of the petition:

We must beware that in the credible deliverie of whatsoever tending to his praise or preferment, we doe it either by warrant of our owne knowledge, or by such certaine report of others, whose opinion we deemed will not bee missed. . . . Besides, it may bee added to the increase of a more speedie performance, the love, (if anie be, or the occasion thereunto sorting) we owe to him we commende or in whose favour we write, either for lie or himselfe, or conveyed from his

friendes, his parents, the consideration of his charge of wife, children or servantes, the wrong offered, benefite to be attained, or whatsoever other matter to bee deemed requisitie or convenient. (100-101)

The resources pertaining to epideictic rhetoric are connected to the praise of the dedicatee. This occasioned much criticism from belletristic scholars, particularly when they disapproved of the moral character of the patrons. Instances of praise were seen as flattery and considered debasing for the author. However, the praise of the dedicatee was an intrinsic element of the dedication: even though dedicatees were generally well-known, authors needed to list their many virtues, as a means to indirectly praise themselves and their works. The compliments showered on the dedicatees functioned as evidence of the author's symbolic capital. Moreover, dedications offered the receivers the opportunity to exhibit their social prestige. This display was especially relevant for the aristocracy, for they needed to restore the eminence they had lost during the Civil Wars and the Protectorate, when aristocrats were deprived of their estates (the symbol of their financial and social superiority).

Regarding the content of the dedications and their recurrent themes and tropes, a number of *topoi* can be listed, all of which fall into three main categories, depending on the element to which they pertain: the dedicatee, the play or the dedicator. As will become apparent, some of them are peculiar to female addressees. The following list illustrates the different dedicatory *topoi*:

## ❖ **Dedicatee**

### **a. Topoi of praise**

The author compliments the dedicatee on her many virtues: beauty, modesty, generosity, piety, birth and rank, judgment, wit, literary or musical taste, motherhood, education, and so forth. Great emphasis was placed on the patroness's beauty, not only because this was the essential quality conventionally attributed to gentlewomen in the courtly code, but also because contemporaries were fascinated by female beauty.<sup>30</sup> The

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<sup>30</sup> In Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier* (1528), which summarises the traditional values of European courts, female beauty was ascribed a social function: "there is no Court, however great, that can possess adornment or splendour or gaiety without the presence of women, and no courtier, no matter how graceful, pleasing or bold, who can ever perform gallant deeds of chivalry unless inspired by the loving and delightful company of women" (210; bk. 3).

instrumentalisation of female beauty as a means to confer prestige on a noble household or the court intensified during Charles II's reign, owing to the necessity of restoring the glory of the monarchy.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, authors adopt the rhetoric and conventions of Neoplatonic literature in some of their dedications, by establishing a connection between beauty and love, portraying them as devoted suitors, in order to bring prestige to the profession of letters.<sup>32</sup>

- **Beauty.** The author extols the dedicatee's beauty: "a Beauty so powerfully arm'd as Your Grace" (Lee, *Gloriana* 151).
- **Lustre.** The dedicatee's beauty and her name add radiance to the play: "He has plac'd You so near a Crown, that You add a Lustre to it by Your Beauty" (Dryden, *The State of Innocence* 88).
- **The ornament.** The dedicatee adds grace and beauty: "the Ornament of the Court, and the object of Wonder to three Kingdoms" (Dryden, *The State of Innocence* 85).
- **The empire.** The dedicatee has submitted the kingdom to her beauty and she governs over them: "But Your Highness hath not only the attractions of Birth and Beauty to support Your Empire (though where e're those Beams are scattered, they injoyn Obedience) but you have also the extreamest Vertue to continue its duration" (Cooke, *Love's Triumph* A3).
- **The Judgement of Paris.** The author argues that the dedicatee has been awarded the golden ball that Paris gave to Aphrodite as the winner of the contest of

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<sup>31</sup> This strategy is also revealed by the vast number of female portraits produced by Sir Peter Lely, Charles II's Principal Painter, and the increased fashion of collecting paintings of beauties, such as the so-called 'Windsor Beauties' which Anne Hyde, first duchess of York, commissioned from Lely. The beauties series also enjoyed a great vogue among aristocrats of smaller means, who could acquire copies painted by studio assistants, and even among the middle classes, who had access to these images through their reproductions in print. In 1675 Sir Thomas Isham, for instance, purchased a portrait of Louise de K roualle for  6 (MacLeod 53).

<sup>32</sup> In Ficino's Neoplatonism, love and beauty play a crucial part in the human quest for virtue and union with God. Love is conceived of as the desire for beauty, since beautiful objects and individuals inspire the soul with love. When love is guided by reason, the soul ascends progressively from love of the particular to the universal, finally reaching God. This theory of love bears resemblance to the medieval courtly love tradition, in which the intangibility of the woman imposes a path of rectitude on the poet-lover. A number of imitative love treatises contributed to popularise Ficino's theories on Platonic love and to spread them into contemporary literature, particularly poetry. Castiglione expounded the argument of one of these, Bembo's *Asolani*, in the fourth book of *The Book of the Courtier*.

beauty with Hera and Athena: “What was said of Greece may be now confirm’d here, That all their Beauties there could make but one Venus; You, like that Goddess, bare away the Golden Prize, whilst all the rest stand, neglected, by, and envy at Your Glory” (Ecclestone, *Noah’s Flood* A2-A2v).

- **Modesty.** The author compliments the dedicatee for her lack of pretension, despite her qualities: “those Excellencies which your Ladyship is so communicative of, and yet so industrious in concealing” (Harris, *Love Is a Lottery* A2).

- **Mercy.** The author extols the dedicatee’s mercy in pardoning the address: “Crime unpardonable, were not your Mercy as signal as your other Virtues” (Settle, *Cambyses* A2v).

- **Judgment.** The author highlights the dedicatee’s judgement: “I could not forbear suffering him to aspire to this second honour of dedicating himself to your grace, from whose noble and unbiassed judgment, he may assure himself of an obliging reception, and a generous security” (D’Urfey, *The Comical History of Don Quixote* 123).

- **Wit.** The author praises the dedicatee’s wit and conversation: “your agreeable Wit in your lightest Conversation” (Trotter, *Love at a Loss* n.p.).

- **Conjugal virtues.** The author characterises the dedicatee as a devoted wife: “an Incomparable Wife, an Affectionate Mother, an Indulgent Mistress, and an Unwearied Benefactress” (Harris, *Love Is a Lottery* A3).

- **Motherhood.** The author depicts the dedicatee as a caring mother: “you, Madam, who are . . . bless’d in an Excellent Husband and fine Children, to whom (with all a Mothers Tenderness) by the strictest care in their Education their Infant years are capable of, you fill all your Duty” (Trotter, *Love at a Loss* n.p.).

- **The heroine.** The dedicatee inspired the heroine in the play or she surpasses her qualities: “I must own I have play’d the Plagiary in making the Dutchess of Albemarle the Pattern for my Roxolana; only with this difference, that I have copied below the Life” (Stapylton, *Ibrahim* A2v).

- **The husband.** The author praises the dedicatee's husband or a male member of the family: "Your Ladyship . . . has drawn its Chiefest Prize, in the Noble Lord, your Ladship's most Excellent Husband" (Harris, *Love Is a Lottery* A2v).
- **The delight of praising the dedicatee.** The author enjoys praising the dedicatee: "Madame, c'est le foible des cœurs tendres quand la matiere leur plaist ils finissent mal-aysement, et s'y j'en croyois le mien, Je vous importunerois encore" (De LaRoche-Guilhen, *Rare en Tout* n.p.).<sup>33</sup>

#### b. Topoi of divination

The utmost form of praise is the divinisation of the dedicatee, which derives from the hyperbolic praise of the patroness and the submissive attitude that the author assumes. The patroness is compared either to the divine or to other elements which are traditionally attributed divine qualities. Most of these comparisons draw on Neoplatonic discourse, given the association between beauty and God.<sup>34</sup>

- **The Sun.** The dedicatee is compared to the Sun: "under so Gracious an Influence my tender Lawrells may thrive, till they become fit Wreaths to offer to the Rays that improve their Growth" (Behn, *Feign'd Curtizans* 87).
- **The goddess.** The dedicatee is explicitly compared to the divine: "The same Cambyses . . . humbly payes his Devotion to that Divinity, to whose protection he commit himself and Fortune" (Settle, *Cambyses* A2v).
- **The sacrifice and the altar.** The author offers the work as a sacrifice made in a temple to honour a goddess: "They [all people] are daily striving to sacrificize their Hearts and utmost Faculties upon that Altar" (Cooke, *Love's Triumph* A2v).
- **Profanation.** The author is committing a profanation by attempting to praise the dedicatee: "Such Virtues shou'd for ever be the Poet's Song; the ablest Pens shou'd

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<sup>33</sup> "Madam, this is the weakness of tender hearts: when the matter pleases them, they end with difficulty, and if I believed mine, I would bother you even more" (My translation).

<sup>34</sup> The importance attributed to beauty lies in the Neoplatonic concept of *claritas*, that is, the splendour of the face of God (and of God's goodness), which is reflected upon all material things. For the Neoplatonists, the ultimate goal of human life is the union with God, which is only possible through the love of beauty, elevating the spirit from the contemplation of material beauty to the quest for the ultimate source of that beauty, which resides with God.

Tune Your Praise; for mean Conceptions Prophane such Worth” (Pix, *The False Friend* A2v).

- **The muse.** The dedicatee is invoked as the poet’s muse or divine source of inspiration: “Nor could all the Muses together, more inspire me, then you alone” (Flecknoe, *Erminia* A2v).
- **The impossibility to praise her adequately.** The author is unfit to praise the dedicatee as she deserves: “I dare not think of offering at any thing in this Address, that might look like a Panegyrick, for fear lest when I have done my best, the World should Condemn me, for saying too little, and you your self check me, for meddling with a Task unfit for my Talent” (Otway, *The Orphan* 4). Variants of this theme are the topos of silence and the topos of the superfluous praise.
- **Silence.** The author refers to the inefficacy of language to praise her adequately and adores her in silence: “Our Tongues have not leisure even to praise you: for Language seems too low a thing to express your Excellence. . . . Thus *Madam*, in the midst of Crouds you Reign in Solitude; and are ador’d with the deepest Veneration, that of Silence. (Dryden, *The State of Innocence* 83).
- **Superfluous praise.** The author comments on the redundancy of the panegyric, since the dedicatee’s virtues are apparent to everyone: “Not that by this I think to add any thing to Your Character; the World was sufficiently sensible of it before: And those shining Qualities, by which Your Ladyship is so eminently distinguish’d, could no more be hidden than they can be exceeded” (Trapp, *Abra-mule* A2).

### c. Topoi of support and favors

- **The dedicatee read the work before its staging or publication:** “The Entertainment you gave it in loose sheets, when it first saw light, encourages me to this presumption, now in its riper growth, to devote it wholly to your Self, and under that Title to stile it happy” (Settle, *Cambyses* A2v).
- **The dedicatee attended a performance at the theatre:** “For though Fortune would not so far bless my endeavours, as to encourage them with your Royal Highnesses presence, when this came into the World” (Otway, *The Orphan* 3).

- **The dedicatee organised a rehearsal or a private performance:** “The Honour your Grace, and the rest of the Nobility and Gentry did me to see this Play in its Rehearsal or Undress, was a happy presage of its future good fortune” (D’Urfey, *The Comical History of Don Quixote, Part 1* 123).

#### d. Other topoi

- **Permission.** The author claims that the dedicatee consented to be offered the work: “Your permission, Madam, has inlightened me, and I with shame look back on my past Ignorance, which suffered me not to pay an Adoration long since, where there was so very much due” (Behn, *Feign’d Curtizans* 86).
- **Hospitality.** The dedicatee hosted the author, possibly during the composition of the work: “Nor am I ever more Poet, then when I am with you at Mestham. There, free from the Distractions of the Town, my minde is recollected. . . . Your green Walks are my Parnassus” (Flecknoe, *Erminia* A2-A2v).

#### ❖ Play

- **The trifle.** The play is characterized as being an insignificant gift when compared to the greatness of the dedicatee: “But whilst I thus boldly proceed to Dedicate this trifle to your Grace, forget to ask pardon for the meanness of the Offering, and the confidence of him that offers it” (Settle, *Cambyses* A2v).
- **The divertissement.** The author hopes that the dedicatee at least will find some entertainment in reading the play: “I cannot doubt but you will find some Divertisement in it” (Dancer, *Agrippa* A3v).
- **The offspring.** The author refers to the work as his/her offspring: “I shall be very glad if this poor Off-spring of my Brain, has Merit enough to deserve the Honour of a Smile from so Great and so Good a Patronesse” (D’Urfey, *The Comical History of Don Quixote, Part 1* 123).
- **The fruit.** The play is referred to as a fruit tribute that the author offers to the dedicatee: “As it was the general Custom amongst the Jews, to present their first Fruits to Heav’n, so I hope Your Grace will pardon this Ambition in me, for laying

this my First born fancy on your Altar, for without Your Protection, I may doubt the Insolence of a Censorious Age” (Ecclestone, *Noah’s Flood* A2v-A3).

- **The monument.** Instead of comparing the dedication to a monument that will preserve the image of the dedicatee, authors extol the name of their patronesses claiming that it will bring eternal glory to their work: “your Highness with this unspeakable Favour, and so Divine a Condescention in Protecting this once pittty’d Hero, will make him live Eternally” (Banks, *The Unfortunate Favourite* A2).

## ❖ **Dedicator**

### a. **Topoi of patronage.**

In the majority of dedications, authors introduce the request for patronage by adopting a humble attitude and resorting to several comparisons to belittle their works and stress the need of favour and protection.

- **The hero.** The author personifies the hero in the play, making him request the dedicatee’s protection: “This great Man, Madam, equall’d, but in the person of the most exquisite of Lovers, him therefore he has rais’d in the Character of Oroondates, to be a Rival to the mighty Alexander in the Romance, and here I have brought him to be so in you, and the rather, because I prefer him to the likenesse of the young, hopeful, and gallant Partner of your self, which I pray he may . . . crown you with greater happinesse then Fame and Fancy have yet created in the minds of the most Heroick Lovers” (Banks, *Rival Kings* A5-A5v)

- **The poor poet.** The author portrays himself as poor and in need of patronage: “Your Highnesses Favor will . . . give an immortality, not only to this poor Poem, but to the (otherwise) most obscure name of, Madam, Your Highness’ most humble and most devoted Servant, John Crowne” (*Calisto* 235). Hagestad argued that this was a rhetorical device whose use did not depend on the living circumstances of the author: some Restoration poets who enjoyed eminence and success resorted to the poor-poet theme, whereas others, despite being needy, eschewed this posture (107).

- **The widow’s mite.** The author makes allusion to Mark 12: 42-44, comparing the play to the small contribution donated by someone poor: “Accept, Great



Princess, this small Offering, / This humble Mite I to your Treasure bring, / The poor mean Present of a bended Muse, / Amidst the Heaps of all the Wealthier Jews” (Banks, *Cyrus The Great* A3).

- **Protection.** The dedicatee will provide protection to the dedicator and to the play: “By appearing in Print, and with the Protection of a Lady whose Character wou’d be its Vindication, and whose tast of Poetry made her a proper Patroness to things of this Nature” (Trotter, *Love at a Loss* n.p.).

- **Obligation.** The author feels obliged to dedicate the play to the dedicatee: “My chief designe herein, was an Essay of gratitude towards your Honour, as a poor acknowledgment of your favours, towards some, the nearness of whose relation to me, hath reflected a great part of the Obligation, upon my self, and rendred me your Debtor” (Tuke, *The Souls Warfare* n.p.).

- **Forgiveness.** Authors apologise to the dedicatee for their presumption in offering their works to her: “I beg your Highness to forgive me this presumption, and that you will be pleas’d to think well of one who cannot help resolving with all the Actions of Life, to endeavour to deserve it” (Otway, *The Orphan* 5).

- **Commendation.** The author refers to the acclaim and recognition received from the audience or influential members of the court or the aristocracy: “The Honour your Grace, and the rest of the Nobility and Gentry did me to see this Play . . . was a happy presage of its future good fortune” (D’Urfey, *The Comical History of Don Quixote* 123).

- **Ambition.** The author exhibits ambition or openly acknowledges it in the dedication: “I have dared to dedicate this Trifle to Your Grace, and in it publish that piece of Boldness to the World, which how far they may forgive me, I am not so much concerned, provided Your own Descending Mercy vouchsafe my Pardon” (Powell, *Alphonso* A2v).

- **Censure.** The author alludes to attacks on the play and hopes that the dedicatee will protect it: “Since thus Guarded, I dare expose it to the World; and stand in less awe of Censures, when your Influence protects it” (Settle, *Cambyses* A2v).

- **The depreciation of wit.** The author laments the depreciation of wit to justify the need of patronage: “What would have been currant Coyn, in the Ages past, will now be look’d on as debas’d Metal; and that Wit, which is esteem’d but mean, and ordinary now, would have been then accounted great, and miraculous” (Pordage, *Siege of Babylon* A2v).

Although the study of dedicatory topoi cannot lead to definite conclusions, in the sense that authors made a free use of these resources, by examining the manner in which dramatists refer to their works and themselves it is possible to evaluate their own assessment of their symbolic capital and position in the literary field. Moreover, it allows us to determine the specificity of these dedicatory epistles and to evaluate the role of women as patroness, in an attempt to ascertain the type of support they provided as well as the influence they exerted on the reputation of the play or on the author’s career.

The next chapters will discuss the particularities of the dedications addressed to female members of the royal family, including the extended royal family, Charles II’s royal mistresses, members of the aristocracy and the gentry and commoners. Each chapter will include a section in which the symbolic capital of the giver and the receiver are measured in relation to the literary careers of the playwrights and the ladies’ backgrounds, which is followed by the analysis of the rhetoric of these dedicatory texts.

#### 4. The royal family

This is by far the largest group after the dedications addressed to noblewomen, with a total of seventeen epistles. The number of dedicators adds up to sixteen, all of them being the authors of the plays, except for Anne Shadwell, who dedicated the work of her late husband. As for the dedicatees, they amount to six: Catherine of Braganza, Mary of Modena, Mary Stuart, Anne Stuart, Anna Scott and Isabella Fitzroy.<sup>1</sup> Mary of Modena was addressed the epistles as duchess of York, while Mary and Anne Stuart were dedicated plays both as royal princesses and queens. Anna Scott, duchess of Monmouth, and Isabella Fitzroy, duchess of Grafton, were perceived as members of the extended royal family, for they were married to illegitimate children of Charles II: James Scott and Henry FitzRoy, respectively. The dedicatees who were offered the largest number of plays were Anne Stuart (5), Anna Scott (4) and Mary of Modena (4).

Although these texts present similar motifs, for the sake of clarity a division has been made between those written during the reign of Charles II (section 4.1) and those composed after the Glorious Revolution (section 4.2). The dedications addressed to members of the extended royal family are discussed separately within the first section.

#### 4.1 Dedications addressed to the royal family in the reign of Charles II

##### 4.1.1 The royal family

The dedicatees in this group include the queen consort, Catherine of Braganza; the second duchess of York, Mary of Modena; and the two royal princesses, Mary and Anne Stuart, daughters of the duke of York by his first wife, Anne Hyde. As for authors, the group of amateur playwrights includes Sir Robert Stapylton, Edward Ecclestone, Sir George

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<sup>1</sup> Sir William Lower offered two plays to members of the royal family: *The Noble Ingratitude* (1659) to Elizabeth Stuart (Charles II's aunt, widow of Frederick V, the Elector Palatine) and *The Amorous Fantasmie* (1659) to Mary Stuart (Charles's sister, widow of Dutch prince William II). These epistles have been discarded because they were published prior to the Restoration. A similar case is the holograph of Cosmo Manuche's *The Banished Shepherdess* now at the Huntington Library (MS 35/C/18), dedicated to Queen Henrietta Maria. William P. Williams has analysed both this and the presentation copy dedicated to James Compton, earl of Northampton (British Library, Add. MS 60273) and has concluded that this tragicomedy about the imminent restoration of Charles II must have been composed before May 1660. Even though the copies could have been produced later, Williams notes that "the subject matter of the play is so occasional that its interest to Manuche's dedicatees would wane very swiftly after May 1660" (398).

Etherege and Samuel Pordage, while the group of professional playwrights comprises Matthew Medbourne, John Crowne, John Dryden, Elkanah Settle, Edward Cooke, Thomas Otway, Anne de La Roche-Guilhen and John Banks. Table 1 summarises the information pertaining to this period. Moreover, we need to consider the circumstances and status of the dedicatees and the dedicators at the moment of the publication of the plays that included the dedications in order to evaluate the social capital of both agents implied in the exchange.<sup>2</sup>

Table 1: Dedications addressed to members of the royal family in Charles II's reign

<b>Dedicator, play</b>	<b>Dedicatee</b>
Medbourne, <i>St Cecily</i> (1666)	Queen Catherine of Braganza, queen consort of Charles II
Crowne, <i>Calisto</i> (1675)	Mary Stuart, Princess Royal, consort of William of Orange
Cooke, <i>Love's Triumph</i> (1678)	
Etherege, <i>The Man of Mode</i> (1676)	Mary of Modena, duchess of York, consort of James Stuart
Dryden, <i>The State of Innocence and Fall of Man</i> (1677)	
Pordage, <i>The Siege of Babylon</i> (1678)	
Otway, <i>The Orphan</i> (1680)	
Banks, <i>The Unhappy Favourite</i> (1682)	Anne Stuart, Princess Royal

### **Dedicatees and dedicators**

The highest ranking lady in this group was obviously the queen. However, despite her position, Catherine of Braganza (1638-1705) was neither particularly popular nor influential at any point. This was partly due to her Catholic and conservative upbringing, which certainly rendered it difficult for her to tolerate the king's reputation as a rake.<sup>3</sup> Shortly after her arrival in England in May 1662, Catherine had a first confrontation with her husband, who had appointed his mistress Barbara Palmer, countess of Castlemaine, as lady of the bedchamber. Catherine had to give way after Charles threatened to send away

<sup>2</sup> Mary and Anne Stuart as well as John Banks will also be discussed in section 4.2. Furthermore, since Banks, Crowne, Dryden, Otway and Settle addressed plays to women pertaining to other social classes, these playwrights will also appear in chapters 5, 6 and 7.

<sup>3</sup> An additional reason was her limited understanding of English: six years after her arrival it was reported that she still had difficulties with the language (Wynne, "Catherine").

her Portuguese attendants and, from then on, she even became courteous to Castlemaine and to the king's eldest son James Scott. Moreover, it was soon noted that the queen struggled with childbearing: she probably suffered a miscarriage in January or February 1666, the same year of Medbourne's dedication.<sup>4</sup> Catherine's failure to produce an heir had serious implications for the royal succession and fuelled speculation.<sup>5</sup>

Catherine was presented with one play by Matthew Medbourne (bap. c. 1637-1680), a secondary actor in the Duke's Company. Medbourne resorted to playwriting in 1666 as means to compensate for the closure of the theatres due to the plague. *St. Cecily*, which was most probably never acted, was licensed on 11 June 1666 (Van Lennep 91) and, even though the title-page bears only the initials "E.M.," Medbourne signed the dedicatory epistle. Medbourne being an actor and a novice author, together with the fact that his play could not be staged, implies that his symbolic capital was low. Moreover, given that only *St. Cecily* and a translation of Molière's *Tartuffe* have survived, despite his allegedly having authored another eight plays, Medbourne must have held a lowly position in the literary field.<sup>6</sup>

Queen Catherine's symbolic capital did not match her social pre-eminence, which facilitated Medbourne's dedication to her. His choice of Catherine as his dedicatee may have been motivated by the subject matter of the play and of his own Catholic sympathies.<sup>7</sup> The play, described on the title-page as "A Christian Tragedy," is a portrayal of the Roman martyr Saint Cecilia. As a Roman Catholic, Medbourne probably equated the persecution of Christians in Imperial Rome with the intolerance towards Catholics in Protestant Britain,

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<sup>4</sup> By contrast, the countess of Castlemaine had already borne the king five children.

<sup>5</sup> Already by December 1662 there were rumours that Catherine was infertile and that the king might legitimise the duke of Monmouth. Later in 1667, after the queen miscarried, it was even reported that Charles would divorce her. The interest he took in the Roos divorce bill in 1669-1670, attending parliament sessions when it was discussed, invited that interpretation (Wynne, "Catherine"; Seaward "Charles").

<sup>6</sup> An epilogue written by Charles Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, for the King's Company revival of Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour* in 1670 refers to Medbourne in these terms: "Here's Mr Matthew, our domestique Wit / Does promise one of the ten Plays h'as writ" (Danchin 1:355). The claim, however, might also be a jocular exaggeration.

<sup>7</sup> Medbourne's *Tartuffe* was also dedicated to a prominent Catholic, Henry Howard, Baron Howard of Castle Rising. Eventually, Medbourne's Catholicism would bring him into trouble. He knew Titus Oates from at least 1676; he became incriminated in the Popish Plot, being charged with high treason and sent to Newgate on 26 November 1678, where he remained until his death on 19 March 1680 (Wanko).

which accounts for his choice of the plot.<sup>8</sup> Given its main theme, Melbourne not only chose an acknowledged Catholic in the royal family, but he may have intended the dedication as a highly elaborate form of praise to the queen. At the beginning of the play, Melbourne provides the following argument:

Cecilie. . . was a young Virgin, beautiful, well descended, and, though she had secretly vow'd Virginitie, yet out of compliance with the disposal of her parents, married to a Nobleman of Rome, named Valerian, then a Worshipper of Idols, but afterward by her perswaded to embrace the Christian Faith: That done, they both joyn their endeavours for the Conversion of Tiburtius, Younger Brother to Valerian, and his Corrivall; and these also prov'd effectual. (A3)

In the light of the subsequent conversion to Catholicism of the duke of York in 1668 and his testimony (albeit not very reliable) that early in 1669 Charles had expressed his intention to publicly proclaim his Catholic faith (Seaward, "Charles"), it seems plausible that Medbourne attempted to subtly liken the queen consort to Saint Cecily. Medbourne may have wanted to present Queen Catherine as being responsible for the conversion of Charles and James, who had been first exposed to Catholicism through their mother Henrietta Maria. Additionally, by drawing a parallel between the queen consort and the saint, Medbourne might have intended to fictionally explain the queen's lack of offspring as if she had made a symbolic vow of virginity to Christ.

Like Queen Catherine, Mary of Modena (1658-1718) met with a rather cool reception in England. Mary was the daughter of Alfonso IV d'Este, duke of Modena and Reggio, and was related to Cardinal Mazarin on her maternal side (Barclay). After the death of the first duchess of York, Anne Hyde, in March 1671, Mary emerged as a favoured candidate for becoming the duke's new consort.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, the match was particularly

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<sup>8</sup> Charles II was nonetheless more sympathetic towards Catholics and other dissenters than his predecessors, as attested by his Declaration of Indulgence of December 1662, through which he unsuccessfully attempted to allow greater freedom of religion (T. Harris, "Popular Criticisms" 40-41).

<sup>9</sup> The earl of Peterborough, who had been appointed to investigate the various candidates, preferred Mary, a choice which was also approved by Louis XIV (Barclay). Despite some previous complications caused by Mary's parents' preference for Spanish king Carlos II as a bridegroom, the wedding took place by proxy in Modena on 20/30 September 1673 and it was formally acknowledged on 21 November by the bishop of Oxford (Barclay).

unpopular, for it was thought to reinforce King Charles's alliance with Louis XIV.<sup>10</sup> The production of an heir was highly expected, particularly given the growing improbability that Catherine of Braganza would bear one. Mary was certainly fertile, but the problem was that either the pregnancies ended in miscarriage or the children died as infants.<sup>11</sup>

The duchess became embroiled in the Popish Plot of 1678 through her former secretary Edward Coleman, whom Oates accused of handling money for the plot and corresponding with Father la Chaise, Louis XIV's confessor (A. Marshall "Oates").<sup>12</sup> The seizure of Coleman's papers in late September 1678 revealed that during the first half of 1676 Modena had contacted the French court through her former Jesuit confessor Father Saint-Germain (Barclay).<sup>13</sup> Some of York's critics implied that the duchess was involved in the conspiracy, but the testimony of Miles Prance in late December diverted attention towards the Catholic members of the queen's household (Barclay). In March 1679 Charles II requested the duke and duchess to leave the country in order to ease the political tension. However, the crisis escalated as a bill was introduced in the Commons in May intending to exclude the duke from the line of succession on the grounds of his Catholicism. The couple remained in Brussels until October, when they were summoned back to London, only to be sent almost immediately to Scotland (Barclay). James acted as the king's high commissioner from October 1679 to March 1682, with only a brief return to England in February 1680 (Speck, "James"). The Yorks' permanent return to England was finally allowed on the grounds of the duchess's new pregnancy, which fuelled the expectations of their supporters.

Four different dramatists presented plays to the duchess of York: Etherege, Dryden, Pordage and Otway. George Etherege (1636-1691/2) came from a family of City tradesmen

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<sup>10</sup> The dukes of Modena acted as the pro-French counterweight to the papacy in central Italy. Moreover, the duchess's mother was not considered royalty, which implied that York had married beneath him and added to the unpopularity of his choice. On 3 November 1673, the House of Commons asked Charles II to annul the marriage, but the petitions and the protests that followed were disregarded.

<sup>11</sup> She first suffered a miscarriage in May 1674 and in January 1675 she gave birth to a daughter who passed away in October, the shock from her death causing a second miscarriage. Another daughter was born in August 1676 and she survived until 1681, and a son was born in November 1677, but died in December (Barclay).

<sup>12</sup> Coleman had been discharged in December 1676 for leaking military information (Barclay).

<sup>13</sup> Through these contacts, Mary had sought the advancement of her uncle and had also supported the English Carmelites at Antwerp, who wished to move to Lille (Barclay).

who had managed to convert themselves into minor royalist gentry. He gained financial independence early in 1658 when he inherited the two family farms in Kent, worth £40 a year (J. Barnard). In the early 1660s Etherege began to compose poetry and by 1663 he had met Charles Sackville, Lord Buckhurst (later earl of Middlesex and Dorset), to whom he dedicated his first play, *The Comical Revenge* (1664). Etherege earned a substantial amount of economic and symbolic capital, for this comedy enjoyed an outstanding success and established him as a dramatist and a court wit.<sup>14</sup> Shortly afterwards he seems to have sought the patronage of Margaret Cavendish or her husband's, as attested by a complimentary poem addressed to the marchioness.<sup>15</sup> The premiere of his second play, *She Wou'd if She Cou'd* (6 February 1668) was a fiasco, despite the great expectation it had created.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, when this comedy was printed, Etherege compensated the small capital it had yielded by styling himself "Esq." on the title-page.

Etherege continued to prosper, being appointed as one of the forty gentlemen of the privy chamber-in-ordinary early in 1668 and secretary to the new ambassador to Turkey, Sir Daniel Harvey (J. Barnard).<sup>17</sup> Once back in England, Etherege continued to represent himself as a gentleman writer: he wrote a prologue for the opening of the new playhouse of the Duke's Company,<sup>18</sup> and nine of his poems were included in *A Collection of Poems, Written on Several Occasions* (1672). His next and last play, *The Man of Mode*, which is

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<sup>14</sup> According to John Downes, the Duke's Company prompter, "the clean and well performance of this Comedy, got the Company more Reputation and Profit than any preceding Comedy; the Company taking in a Months time at it 1000*l*." (57).

<sup>15</sup> James Thorpe argues that this piece, entitled "To her Excellence the Marchioness of Newcastle after the Reading of her Incomparable Poems" must have been composed before the marquess's elevation to the dukedom in March 1665; and after the staging of *The Comical Revenge*, based on "the underlying suggestion in ll. 29-40, that a comparison could be drawn between the literary efforts of Newcastle and Etherege (90).

<sup>16</sup> Samuel Pepys recorded that King Charles and much of the court were in the audience and that Etherege blamed the cast: "among the rest, here was the Duke of Buckingham today openly sat in the pit; and there I found him with my Lord Buckhurst and Sidly and Etherige the poett—the last of whom I did hear mightily find fault with the Actors, that they were out of humour and had not their parts perfect, and that Harris did do nothing, nor could do so much as sing a Ketch in it, and so was mightily concerned: while all the rest did through the whole pit blame the play as a silly, dull thing, though there was something very roguish and witty; but the design of the play, and end, mighty insipid" (9: 54).

<sup>17</sup> This position brought Etherege prestige and a salary of £200 a year (J. Barnard).

<sup>18</sup> The Dorset Garden theatre was inaugurated with a performance of Dryden's *Sir Martin Mar-All* on 9 November 1671. Etherege's plays were all produced by the Duke's Company.



unanimously acknowledged as one of the best comedies of the period, was probably premiered on 11 March 1676 at the Dorset Garden theatre (Van Lennep 243) and it became an immediate and lasting success. The comedy was embedded in court-culture and the characters were inspired on some of its members.<sup>19</sup> It also exhibited the author's prestigious circle of acquaintances and friends: a prologue and a song were written by Sir Car Scrope, and the epilogue by Dryden; the king attended the premiere and members of the court later performances and the dedication was accepted by Mary of Modena. Etherege's social standing and the prestige he accumulated through drama resulted in him entering the service of the duchess of York, as suggested by the epistle to Modena, as well as the fact that he was later favored by the duke.<sup>20</sup>

Despite issuing from the Puritan gentry, John Dryden (1631-1700) seized the opportunity of the restoration of the monarchy to advance his literary career: he offered King Charles a poem entitled *Astraea Redux* ("Justice brought back") in June 1660, which was followed by *To His Sacred Majesty, a Panegyrick on his Coronation* in April 1661. His friendship with Sir Robert Howard (the earl of Berkshire's son), which began in the early 1660s, proved advantageous for Dryden, particularly after Howard became a shareholder of the King's Company in late January 1662 (Vander Motten, "Howard").<sup>21</sup> The friendship turned into a family connection in December 1663 when Dryden married Howard's sister, Elizabeth (Hammond, "Dryden"). Dryden managed to build a successful career as a playwright, authoring twenty-two plays, two semi-operas (*The State of Innocence and Fall of Man*, 1677, and *King Arthur*, 1691), a masque (*Albion and Albanius*, 1685), and four collaborative pieces.<sup>22</sup> Additionally, Dryden wrote one of the main critical texts of the period, the essay *Of Dramatick Poesie* (1668), which marked him out as a major figure of

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<sup>19</sup> Dorimant was seen as representing Rochester, Monmouth or Buckhurst, whereas Sir Fopling was believed to be inspired on Buckingham, Beau Hewitt or Etherege himself (Hume, *Development* 90, 91n2).

<sup>20</sup> Etherege appears listed as one of the pensioners in the duke's household in September 1682, a position for which he received £100 a year. Moreover, when the duke succeeded to the throne in 1685, Etherege was appointed resident at Ratisbon, in Bavaria (J. Barnard).

<sup>21</sup> Dryden contributed commendatory verses to Howard's *Poems* in 1660 and they wrote a play jointly, *The Indian Queen* (1665), which was published under Howard's name.

<sup>22</sup> Dryden collaborated with Howard on *The Indian Queen* (1665), with the duke of Newcastle on *Sir Martin Mar-All* (1668) and with Lee on *The Duke of Guise* (1683) and the semi-opera *Oedipus* (1679).

Restoration culture. Thanks to his growing reputation, Dryden was in a position to negotiate with both theatrical companies an unprecedented remuneration and eventually in 1668 he signed a contract with the King's stipulating that he would write three plays a year for a share in the company (Osborn 202). This arrangement would theoretically provide the dramatist with more profits than the customary third-day benefit, as well as some financial stability (Winn, *John Dryden* 191).<sup>23</sup> Further recognition came that very same year when he was made poet laureate on 13 April, which was followed by his appointment as historiographer royal on 18 August 1670.<sup>24</sup>

Dryden took advantage of the publication of his plays to boost his career and gain renown by including dedications in most of them. He often targeted eminent persons, such as Roger Boyle, earl of Orrery (*The Rival Ladies*, 1664), the duke of Monmouth (*Tyrannick Love*, 1670), William Cavendish, duke of Newcastle (*An Evening's Love*, 1671), the duke of York (*The Conquest of Granada*, 1672), Thomas Clifford, baron Clifford of Chudleigh (*Amboyna*, 1673), Sir Charles Sedley (*The Assignment*, 1673) and John Sheffield, earl of Mulgrave (*Aureng-Zebe*, 1676). The work which he dedicated to Mary of Modena, *The State of Innocence*, was a highly ambitious project. Dryden conceived this operatic adaptation of Milton's *Paradise Lost* (for which he had obtained Milton's permission) in 1674 with the intention of exploiting the refurbished facilities of the Theatre Royal, but the funding for the lavish scenery and effects it required could not be obtained and eventually the play was not staged (Hammond, "Dryden"). Despite not having yielded symbolic capital upon the stage, the work circulated widely in manuscript and later in print, going through nine editions by 1700.<sup>25</sup> It is unclear why Dryden decided to publish it precisely in 1677, but

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<sup>23</sup> According to the other sharers, who nonetheless might have exaggerated the sum, the contract brought Dryden £300-400 a year. Both Osborn and Winn have demonstrated that since the burning of the Bridges St theatre in January 1672, the King's was staggering under the burden of debt, which evidently diminished Dryden's returns (206; *John Dryden* 574n83). In fact, in 1678 the dramatist terminated the sharing agreement and began to write for the thriving Duke's Company in return for the profits of the third day.

<sup>24</sup> After Dryden received the second appointment, the salary for both offices was set at £200 a year, although it was irregularly paid (see Winn, *John Dryden* 528-531).

<sup>25</sup> There are seven extant manuscript copies of *The State of Innocence*, all of which appear to have been produced by professional scribes in the late seventeenth century; for further details, see Dearing's edition (460). The play was entered in the Stationers' Register on 17 April 1674 (Van Lennep 211). The printing of the work in 1677 could have been prompted by need of extra income, for Dryden had not published any new work since 1676.

he undoubtedly used the capital it had raised (among the readers who had had access to manuscript copies) to assert his allegiance to the duke of York, whom he compliments in the dedication.

Samuel Pordage (c. 1633-1691) had middle-class origins, but he resorted to poetry and translation as a means to pursue a courtly career. Pordage's publications in the early 1660s were marked by a royalist spirit: *Poems upon Several Occasions*, which included panegyrics to Monck and King Charles, appeared in 1660 and were followed by *Heroick Stanzas on His Majesties Coronation* in 1661. These works might have helped him enter the service of the duke of Buckingham and later become a steward to the earl of Pembroke (N. Smith). In the 1670s Pordage turned to the stage and authored two heroic tragedies inspired in French prose romances. One of these, *The Siege of Babylon* (1678), was dedicated to the duchess of York.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, in the years of the Exclusion Crisis, Pordage seems to have developed Whiggish sympathies: he dedicated an edition of Reynolds's *The Triumph of God's Revenge Against the Sin of Murther* (1679) to the earl of Shaftesbury, the leader of the exclusionist faction; he criticised Lord Danby (the king's former chief minister) in *A New Apparition of S. Edmund-Bery Godfrey's Ghost to the E. of D*, which was issued anonymously in 1681; he defended Shaftesbury from Dryden's attacks twice in 1682, in *Azaria and Hushai* and *The Medal Revers'd: a Satire Against Persecution*, while criticising the duke of York and the king's French mistress, the duchess of Portsmouth (N. Smith).

A former actor of the Duke's, Thomas Otway (1652-1685) began a promising playwriting career for his company with the tragedy *Alcibiades* (1675), which he dedicated to Charles Sackville, then earl of Middlesex. His well-applauded debut was followed by three successful pieces which were methodically dedicated to other eminent members of the king's circle: *Don Carlos* (1676), to the duke of York, *Titus and Berenice* and *The Cheats of Scapin* (1677), which were printed together, to John Wilmot, earl of Rochester. Nevertheless, his following play, *Friendship in Fashion* (1678), which he dedicated to

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<sup>26</sup> Most probably the play was unsuccessful on stage, for no records of performances subsist. Van Lennep places the premiere tentatively in September or October 1677, the date of the printing licence being 2 November 1677 (263). This is another dramatic adaptation of La Calpranède's *Cassandra*, which Hume labels as a "heroic dinosaur" (*Development* 285).

Sackville (now earl of Dorset), reveals disillusionment with theatrical controversies.<sup>27</sup> After briefly joining the regiment raised by the duke of Monmouth to intervene in the Franco-Dutch War, Otway resumed his dramatic profession with *The History and Fall of Caius Marius* (1680), a tragedy in which he responded to the tensions caused by the Popish Plot. Otway dedicated *Caius Marius* to his friend Anthony Cary, viscount Falkland.<sup>28</sup> The choice of the duchess of York as dedicatee of his next play, *The Orphan* (1680), is an open statement of his Toryism and support to the duke at the time of the Exclusion Crisis.<sup>29</sup> In fact, in the prologue, Otway joyfully celebrates the Yorks' brief return from their exile in Scotland on 24 February 1680, which had occurred less than a fortnight before the first recorded performance of this play (Van Lennep 285-286):

Receive him! Oh receive him as his Friends;  
Embrace the blessings which he Recommends;  
Such quiet as your Foes shall ne're destroy;  
Then shake off Fears, and clap your hands for Joy. (7, lines 33-36)

Otway again rallied to the duke's defense in *The Poet's Complaint of his Muse*, which was listed in the Hilary Term Catalogue for 1680 (Arber 1: 384).<sup>30</sup> Otway's *Venice Preserv'd*—a “brilliant anti-Whig fable” in Hume's words (*Development* 347)—was staged shortly before the duke's permanent return from Scotland in March 1682, and the duke himself attended a performance of this play in April, an occasion which the author commemorated with a new

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<sup>27</sup> In the prologue, Otway mentions that some had “strove to wrong him with his Friends” (1: 335), probably with his patron, since in the dedication he seems concerned about having offended him. Moreover, Hume points out that the comedy must have had a “mediocre success,” based on the lack of evidence of revivals, the fact that it was not reprinted and the tone of the dedication (*Development* 332).

<sup>28</sup> The dedication to Cary might have been prompted by reasons of personal profit: perhaps Otway was aware of Cary's intention to marry the daughter of the wealthy Sir Rowland Lytton and attempted to ingratiate himself with his friend to reap some benefit (see Le Fevre).

<sup>29</sup> *The Orphan* proved popular on the stage and earned Otway a symbolic capital which he would later invest in dedicating it to Modena. The play must have pleased Otway's patroness and the duke, for it was produced at court during James's reign, on 10 January 1687 (Van Lennep 355).

<sup>30</sup> Neither this time was Otway successful in securing a permanent patron, for the dedicatee of *The Poet's Complaint*, Thomas Butler, earl of Ossory, passed away in July 1680 (Davies, “Butler”).

epilogue.<sup>31</sup> In this epilogue, Otway stresses the duke's loyalty and obedience to the king. He also alludes to the duke's planned return to Scotland to fetch his pregnant duchess and celebrates the advent of an heir as a remedy to heal the nation's internal divisions:

He only brings a Medicine fit to aswage  
A peoples folly, and rowz'd Monarch's rage;  
An Infant Prince yet lab'ring in the womb,  
Fated with wond'rous happiness to come,  
He goes to fetch the mighty blessing home. (434, lines 51-55)<sup>32</sup>

The royal princesses, Mary and Anne, were also approached by playwrights in search of a noble patroness. Mary Stuart (1662-1694) was the eldest child of the duke of York by his first wife, Anne Hyde. Her birth was not considered politically important, for it was assumed that Queen Catherine would bear children soon and also that Mary would have a brother who would precede her in the line of succession (Van der Kiste 31).<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless, when Mary and her sister Anne were declared children of the state after the death of their mother in 1671, King Charles and his advisers assumed responsibility for their education and ensured that they would be brought up as Protestants (Van der Kiste 33).<sup>34</sup> In the absence of a legitimate heir by King Charles, Mary was second in the line of succession and therefore her marriage became a matter of dynastic concern. The king's favourite candidate was William of Orange, while the duke of York favoured a match with the dauphin. Although the negotiations for the marriage between Mary and William had begun in the winter of 1671, these had to be stopped until the end of the Third Anglo-Dutch War in

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<sup>31</sup> The first recorded performance of *Venice Preserv'd* was on 9 February, as demonstrated by a prologue and epilogue which were printed together before the issuing of the first edition. The duke and duchess of York saw the play on 21 April.

<sup>32</sup> The hopes of an infant prince were soon shattered: the duchess gave birth to a daughter on 15 August 1682, but the child passed away on 6 October (Barclay). Due to this unfortunate loss, Otway's previous enthusiastic celebration of the news might have caused the dramatist embarrassment and dissuaded him from courting the Yorks' patronage further.

<sup>33</sup> Six more children were born to the duke and the first duchess of York, although only Anne survived infancy.

<sup>34</sup> As a result, Mary and Anne were moved away from their Catholic father and they were taken to Richmond Palace. Mary's education was entrusted to George Morley, bishop of Winchester, Henry Compton, bishop of London, and Edward Lake, archdeacon of Exeter (Van der Kiste 33).

February 1674.<sup>35</sup> In the autumn of 1677, William's marriage to Mary was arranged between himself, the king and the duke, and it was celebrated in November (Speck, "Mary"). Late that month the couple departed for the Netherlands and in mid-December a sumptuous reception was held at The Hague, at which Mary made a good impression. Unfortunately, Princess Mary could not fulfil the dynastic ambitions of the Dutch and the British: she suffered a miscarriage in spring 1678 and again the following year, never conceiving again (Speck, "Mary").

Before she left England in 1677, Princess Mary was the recipient of two dedications. The first was offered by John Crowne (1641-1712), a dramatist with an advantageous family background: he was the son of Colonel William Crowne, who owned a partnership for the territory of Nova Scotia and was, on his mother's side, related to the Mackworths, an influential Puritan family from Shropshire (Neman). Despite his favourable origins, the family fortunes declined shortly after the Restoration and Crowne had to resort to different activities to make a living.<sup>36</sup> He served as a gentleman-usher to a lady in London before turning to professional playwriting.<sup>37</sup> His first piece, *Juliana*, was staged by the Duke's Company in June 1671 (Van Lennep 182-183) and appeared in print that year with a dedication to the earl of Orrery, who not only held financial and political influence, but was also an amateur playwright.<sup>38</sup> Crowne's next work, *The History of Charles the Eighth of France*, was first performed by the Duke's in November 1671 (Van Lennep 190). According to John Downes, the company's prompter, this was "the first new Play Acted" at the Dorset Garden theatre and "it was all new Cloath'd, yet lasted but 6 Days together, but 'twas Acted now and then afterwards" (69). The text was issued the following year and it included a dedicatory epistle to the earl of Rochester. Surprisingly, there are no additional records of Crowne's dramatic production until 1674, when he was commissioned to adapt for the

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<sup>35</sup> William had to break off the marriage negotiations on his appointment as stadholder in 1672, to prevent being identified with the English court and its pro-French foreign policy (Speck, "Mary").

<sup>36</sup> Since Colonel Crowne had bought the partnership during the Protectorate, this was invalidated in 1661 and, after the treaty of Breda (1667), the territory was yielded to France (Neman).

<sup>37</sup> Crowne's first literary venture was a prose romance entitled *Pandion and Amphigenia* (1665), which proved popular (Neman).

<sup>38</sup> Roger Boyle, first earl of Orrery (1621-1679), was one of the most applauded playwrights in the 1660s and an influential figure in the shaping of the heroic play. Dryden admired his use of the rhyming couplet (T. Barnard, "Orrery").

Duke's an anonymous translation of Racine's *Andromaque* (1668).<sup>39</sup> Being a summer production (Van Lennep 217), the play made little profit and therefore, when the text was printed in 1675, Crowne included an epistle to the reader in which he justified himself, explaining his involvement in this project.<sup>40</sup> The ill success of *Andromache* did not diminish the symbolic capital that Crowne had formerly accumulated, for it was also in the summer of 1674 that he received, through the influence of Rochester, the commission to compose a masque for the princesses Mary and Anne.<sup>41</sup> This work, *Calisto* (1675), which Crowne dedicated to its originator, Princess Mary, dominated court life from September 1674 until February 1675 and it publicly established Crowne as a court author.<sup>42</sup>

The second playwright who addressed Princess Mary was Edward Cooke (fl. 1676-1678), who only produced a dramatic work, *Love's Triumph* (1678), for which there is no record of performance (Van Lennep 263). This was an adaptation of La Calprenède's highly popular romance *Cassandra* (1642-1645 or 1650), as were Nathaniel Lee's *The Rival Queens* (1677) and Banks's *The Rival Kings* (1677). Little is known of Cooke's life, which hinders the assessment of his social capital. However, he styled himself "Esq." on the title-page of *Love's Triumph* and of two other works which he translated from the French, *The Divine Epicurus* (1676) and *A Just and Seasonable Reprehension of Naked Breasts and Shoulders* (1678).<sup>43</sup> Moreover, based on the fact that these three works were issued in the late 1670s, that Cooke presented himself as an esquire and that he dedicated *Love's Triumph* to Mary Stuart a few months after she married William of Orange, he was most probably the author of four Whiggish tracts published in the early 1680s signed by an

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<sup>39</sup> Arthur F. White provides further detail on the circumstances of the creation of *Andromache* (*John Crowne*, 32-33).

<sup>40</sup> In fact, Crowne signs the epistle but his name is not exhibited in the title-page.

<sup>41</sup> *Calisto* was Anne's first appearance in a court performance, but Mary had already participated in Fletcher's *The Faithful Shepherdess* on 6 April 1670 (Winn, *Queen Anne* 2; see Van Lennep 169).

<sup>42</sup> The masque enjoyed an outstanding success thanks to its musical elements and sumptuous production, one of the ladies wearing "twenty thousand pounds value of Jewells" (*The Life of Mrs. Godolphin*, qtd. in Van Lennep 229). The masque and its production circumstances are meticulously discussed in Eleanore Boswell's classic study *The Restoration Court Stage* (1932). The printed version was advertised in the Term Catalogue for 24 November 1675 (Arber 1: 218).

<sup>43</sup> The first was a translation of Antoine Le Grand's *L'Épicure spirituel* (1669) and the second of Jacques Boileau's *De l'abus des nuditez de gorge* (1675).

Edward Cooke, of the Middle Temple, Esquire.<sup>44</sup> Significantly, one of these, *A True and Perfect Narrative of the Inhumane Practices . . . of Jesuits and Papists, toward Protestants at Home and Abroad . . .* (1680) was dedicated to earl of Shaftesbury.

Princess Anne Stuart (1665-1714) was the fourth child and second daughter of the duke of York and Anne Hyde. At the age of three, in June 1668, she was sent to Paris to treat an eye condition and returned to England in 1670, only nine months before her mother died.<sup>45</sup> Although Princess Anne was, like her sister, separated from her father and brought up as an Anglican by express royal command, her fortunes remained inevitably linked to her father and stepmother, Mary of Modena (Gregg, “Anne”). Anne was allowed to join her exiled father in Brussels in August 1679 but was carefully watched over by Anglican chaplains (Gregg, “Anne”). Contrariwise, the princess was ordered to remain in London when the duke and duchess were exiled to Scotland, although she visited her father in July 1681 for a sojourn of ten months (Gregg, *Queen Anne* 26). Banks’s *The Unhappy Favourite* (1682) was issued before Anne’s return from Scotland in the spring of 1682, a particularly difficult time for the princess, for it was rumoured that John Sheffield, Lord Mulgrave, a bachelor rake and her senior by eighteen years, was developing a growing interest in her (Gregg, *Queen Anne* 27).<sup>46</sup>

The play presented to Princess Anne was written by John Banks (c. 1652-1706).<sup>47</sup> He probably came from a middle-class family, as suggested by the fact that he enrolled in the New Inn Court of Chancery.<sup>48</sup> As many other students of the law, Banks turned to the

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<sup>44</sup> *Love’s Triumph* was advertised in the Term Catalogue for May 1678 (Arber 1: 310). The *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* contains two separate articles for authors named Edward Cooke who were active in the late 1670s and early 1680s (cf. Burns and Greenberg).

<sup>45</sup> The princess was first placed under the care of her grandmother, Queen Dowager Henrietta Maria, and, after the queen’s death, her aunt’s, Henriette-Anne, duchess of Orleans (Gregg, “Anne”). On the duchess’s sudden death in June 1670, which the English suspected to be of poison, Princess Anne was taken back to England, with the diplomatic excuse that she was completely cured (Gregg, *Queen Anne* 8).

<sup>46</sup> *The Unhappy Favourite* was entered in the Michaelmas Term Catalogue for 1681 (Arber 1: 462)

<sup>47</sup> Princess Anne was also the dedicatee of Mary Pix’s *The Inhumane Cardinal* (1696). Being included in a narrative work, the epistle will not be analysed in the present study.

<sup>48</sup> Paula de Pando claims that Banks’s social capital was inferior to Shadwell’s and Wycherley’s, who attended the more prestigious Inns of Court (2). That Banks was associated with an Inn of Chancery suggests that he may have practiced the law as a solicitor.



stage with the intention of deriving symbolic capital from his works and investing it in starting a career at court or the administration. *The Rival Kings* was staged by the King's Company in June 1677 and it certainly capitalised on the popularity of Nathaniel Lee's *The Rival Queens*, which the company had produced in March (Brayne; Van Lennep 253, 258). Despite the lack of evidence on its reception, Banks's first piece must have been successful enough for him to dedicate it to Katherine Herbert, daughter of the earl of Danby, and to continue playwriting.<sup>49</sup> *The Rival Kings* was followed by *The Destruction of Troy* (produced in the autumn of 1678) and a series of five historical she-tragedies, all of which but one were dedicated to female aristocrats whom Banks chose with political intent, as Paula de Pando has argued: "his female dedicatees are often descendants from the characters in his plays and, without exception, are also linked in one way or another with the Whigs" (43).<sup>50</sup> Banks's third staged tragedy, *The Unhappy Favourite* (1682), was produced by the King's Company around May 1681 and it appeared in print the following year with a dedication to Princess Anne (Van Lennep 295-296). The play appears to have been fairly successful on the stage, for it was acted at least five times and King Charles and the queen attended one of the performances, an occasion for which Dryden wrote a new prologue.<sup>51</sup> It also proved popular in print, going through four editions before 1700. Pando has rightly shown that Banks's choice of Princess Anne as a dedicatee "would have resonated with those who considered her sister Mary and her as a bastion of Whiggish hopes" (45). Additionally, since the heroine of this tragedy was Queen Elizabeth, the dramatist justified the epistle to the princess by mentioning her descent from the Plantagenets, Henry VII being their common ancestor.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> In this first dedication, Banks took all the care to construct the persona of an amateur genteel playwright. A full analysis of the epistle is provided in chapter 6, p.

<sup>50</sup> The exception was *The Innocent Usurper* (1694), which he dedicated to his publisher Richard Bentley. The dedications addressed to Katherine Manners, Elizabeth Percy and Mary Howard are examined in chapter 6, p. .

<sup>51</sup> The printed version included two prologues, one "Spoken by Major Mohun, the First Four Dayes" (A4) and the other "Spoken to the King and Queen at their coming to the House, and Written on purpose By Mr. Dryden" (A4v).

<sup>52</sup> Banks praises the princess's lineage and connects it to the plot in the following manner: "Nor are Your Virtues, or Your Royal Blood less admirable, sprung from the Inestimable Fountain of so many Illustrious Plantagenets, that I stand amaz'd at the Mightyness of the Subject which I have chosen" (A2v).

## Dedications

Since the ladies addressed in these texts are all royal women, it is hardly surprising that poets should resort to the divinisation of the patroness as one of their favourite laudatory motifs. The characterisation of the dedicatee as a being of divine nature is articulated through a variety of themes, some of which are drawn from Neoplatonic literature. This idealisation of the patroness is generally accompanied by a similar depiction of a male member of the royal family, specifically in the epistles addressed to Princess Mary and Mary of Modena in the years of the Exclusion Crisis. By idealising these patronesses and their husbands, dramatists could indicate their political leanings, though in a less direct manner.

The two epistles addressed to Princess Mary in this period handle this motif differently. In the dedication to *Calisto* (1675), Crowne adopts a very deferential attitude, apologising for his inability to represent his dedicatee as she deserves. The author introduces the divinisation of the princess by comparing her to an angel (an image which he consistently repeats) and he also seizes the opportunity to praise Princess Anne:

I should have indited thoughts fine as your own, and made you speak as excellently as you think, you then laid a task on me too great for any thing but an *Angel*. For none can have *Angelical* thoughts, but they who have *Angelical* virtues; and none do, or ever did, in so much youth, come so near the perfection of *Angels* as yourself, and your young Princely Sister, in whom all those excellencies shine, which the best of us can but rudely paint. (233, emphasis added)

Crowne amplifies the panegyric by using absolute expressions, superlatives and comparatives, emphasising the dedicatee's wit, charms, youth, beauty and natural grace and insisting on the fascination that she exerted over the audience. Significantly, even though Crowne endeavours to appear humble, claiming that Mary's virtues compensated for his lack of talent, he justifies himself asserting that, given her superior nature, no one could have depicted her appropriately:

But, Madam, what need was there of that *perfection* of wit, the charms of your person, youth, and mein, the lustre of your high quality, and the *extraordinary* grace that attended everything you said and did, spoke to the eyes and souls of *all that saw you*, in a Language *more divine* than wit can invent, in a Language wherein Nature entertained them with her own

Ingenuity, and by *a thousand* charming expressions so took up *all their attention*, that the *best* of writers could not have made you speak anything, your audience would have been at leisure to regard, or for which they would have descended from one moment's pleasure of admiring you. (233-234, emphasis added)

Moreover, the dramatist takes advantage of the dedication to seek the patronage of Mary's father, the duke of York. Not only does he introduce his dedicatee as the "Eldest Daughter of His Royal Highness The Duke" (232) and lavishes praise on him, but he also congratulates himself for being in his service, implying that he expects to receive his support:

I remembered in whose service I was employed, in the service of a Princess, over whose great and victorious Father a glorious Genius always hovered, assisting the meanest of his followers, when engaged in services of his, of what kind soever; and sure, thought I, he will not neglect me, now I serve so fair, so excellent, and so considerable a part of him; now I am under the shadow of his wings, I shall partake of his influence. (232)

The second epistle addressed to Mary Stuart abounds in motifs of praise and divinisation and it is highly relevant that the offering was made during the incipience of the Exclusion Crisis. Cooke justifies the dedication of *Love's Triumph* (1678) by presenting Mary's majestic and heavenly attributes as being derived from her royal descent, while indicating his adherence to King Charles: "For so Illustrious, Madam, and highly eminent is Your Birth (being derived from the first Prince of the Royal Blood, and from the only Brother to the best and greatest Monarch in the World) that You naturally inspire into all people the extremity of an universal Submission and Respect" (A2v). The external expression of the princess's "Supreme Quality," argues the author, is "so vast a number of excelling Charms, as that they cannot be lookt upon without dazle-ing and adoration" (A2v).<sup>53</sup> Cooke develops this subtle introduction of the imagery of radiance through the Neoplatonic motif of the eyes and their comparison to the Sun: "There is in Your Highness's Looks, such a Shine and Lustre of Beauty, as is not to be resembled by any thing below a Divinity; and as the brightness and glory of it, like the Sun, delights and

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<sup>53</sup> Cooke also insists on the Neoplatonic correspondence between Princess Mary's beauty and her inner qualities "that Vertue, Madam, of pure and unspotted Innocence, Honour, and Goodness, which . . . brings You as near to the Resemblance of Heaven, as it is possible for any thing of humanity ever to think to attain" (A3).

refreshes the eyes of all Mankind” (A2v-A3). As in Neoplatonic literature, the princess’s extraordinary beauty and godlike nature elicits a paradoxical combination of fear and joy, similar to love, from all those who see her:

Like a Divinity too, you cannot be beheld without fear and trembling. This, Madam, is the Unanimous Suffrage of all the Happy world that have yet been blest with a Sight of Your Incomparable Perfections. Every way your Beauty is triumphant; there is such a sweet composure of greatness and delicacy in your eyes, that You equally make all hearts to languish and consume in their devotion to You. (A3)

When apologising for not being capable of praising her appropriately, Cooke complements the idealisation of the princess with the use of religious language, placing her above him to stress the social difference between them and portraying her as a deity whom he adores:

But, Madam, I find how insufficient I am to speak of either of your Princely Vertues as I ought, and therefore fear I have already too much offended your Highness in what I have said of them; being so vastly inferiour to their particular Merit, that, methinks, this small Attempt has made me guilty of a very high profanation. The Honour of so extraordinary an Employment ought to be reserved for some more happy Genius, that can ascend to your Excellencies, and my temerity would not be excusable, if I did not bound it with my earnest Prayers for both your present and eternal Felicities. (A4)

Cooke pays tribute to Mary’s husband, William of Orange, in similarly hyperbolic terms. As is customary in the genre, the playwright begins by commending their dynasties and celebrating the marriage of William and Mary as “the greatest Union that ever was, between the two most Illustrious Houses of York and Nassau” (A3). Cooke commends the prince in a most flattering manner, characterising him as being of divine nature and underlining his eminence: “Your Highness is joyned to a Prince, that seems, as it were, to be divested of his Humanity; he is so God-like in his Vertues, and all his Actions; a Prince of such dazeling Brightness in his Glory and Renown, as is impossible to be exprest, except we set down what ever is accounted excellent, and that He is” (A3v). Since military superiority and capability are traditionally ascribed to noblemen, the author elaborates on these qualities, while idealising William’s physical appearance:

A Prince that knew how to Conquer, before the World could reasonably imagine he was capable of wielding His Sword. His Countenance is so

Martial, that it plainly expresses the great Courage he hath, not to know what Fear is in himself. . . . He has such Grace-full and Winning Charms, as none is able to behold him without Admiration. Such Justness and Regularity, is in his Shape and Meen, such Sweetness in his Motions, and such a Generous Condescension in all His ways; that he does not so much make to himself Slaves by the Force of His Valour, as he does cause all Hearts to become Tributary to him by His Obliging and Familiar Address. (A3v)

Cooke connects the individual panegyrics of Mary and William of Orange by presenting the dedicatee and her husband as being part of a divine unity and emphasises the respect that they inspire, perhaps subtly implying a general hope for their potential succession to the English throne: “Both your Divine and Goodly Qualities are so numerous, and yet united, that, like a Deity, you can never be ador’d but in all your Attributes: And, Madam, both of you must continually expect to receive the Prayers and Wishes of all Mankind, for the renew’d Accessions of your, if possible, more flourishing Felicities” (A3). In fact, Cooke develops the idea that their union brings the nation honour and joyfulness, which again can be interpreted as the effect that their rule could produce:

But, Madam, Heaven has not only been consulting to make You, and your Prince happy; it has likewise been considering the happiness of the whole Kingdom of England, as also that of all the High and Mighty Neighbour-States in this Affair: We are in some measure sharers of your Glory; and (if your Highness will bear with me in the Expression on the general behalf) will not give you the whole Monopoly of it; no, our Hearts must have the priviledge of rejoicing too. (A3v)

The divinisation motif is also foremost in the four epistles addressed to Mary of Modena, duchess of York. In 1676, the duchess accepted the dedication of Etherege’s *The Man of Mode*. While extolling her nobility and beauty, the dramatist subtly divinises his patroness through the traditional imagery of brightness: “This universal submission and respect is due to the greatness of Your Rank and Birth; but You have other Illustrious Qualities, which are much more ingaging. Those wou’d but *dazle*, did not these really charm the Eyes and Understandings of all who have the Happiness to approach You” (183, emphasis added). Remarkably, the author does not mention the duke and takes on an insouciant tone, as if he had already secured Modena’s patronage. For instance, when resorting to theme of the impossibility of adequately praising his dedicatee, he argues almost brazenly that, although he would like to commend her virtues, he will not do so for it is

unnecessary (her qualities are apparent to everyone), inappropriate (prose is not the right form for her encomium) and even detrimental to himself (he prefers to be her servant than a poet):

Authors on these occasions are never wanting to publish a particular of their Patrons Virtues and Perfections; but Your Royal Highness's are so eminently known, that did I follow their Examples, I shou'd but paint those wonders here of which every one already has the Idea in his mind. Besides, I do not think it proper to aim at that in Prose, which is so glorious a subject for Verse; in which hereafter if I show more zeal than skill, it will not grieve me much, since I less passionately desire to be esteem'd a Poet, than to be thought, Madam, Your Royal Highness's Most humble, most obedient, and most faithful Servant. (184)

Although the next play submitted to Mary of Modena, Dryden's *The State of Innocence* (1677), was printed only a year later, the strategy employed is noticeably different, for this work contains one of the most extensive eulogies. Dryden begins the epistle by discussing the ambition of poets and their endeavour "to please . . . the Beautiful and the Great," building on these attributes to elevate the duchess to quasi-divine status: "Beauty is their Deity to which they Sacrifice, and Greatness is their Guardian-Angel which protects them" (81).<sup>54</sup> The lady's greatness and her excellence are linked to her ancestry, as Dryden extols her "Illustrious Family" arguing that she derives her many virtues from "a long-continu'd Race of Princes, famous for their Actions both in Peace and War" (81) and aptly introduces the request for patronage by praising the support that the house of Este had always given to the arts: "I can yield, without envy, to the Nation of Poets, the Family of Este to which Ariosto and Tasso have ow'd their Patronage; and to which the World has ow'd their Poems" (81). But the playwright also underlines the duchess's crucial position in the English dynastic line, as he alludes to the heirs she was expected to give birth to ("those [generals and heroes] which You are to produce for the British Chronicle," 81)

If greatness is related to lineage, beauty is presented as a specifically female attribute, one in which Mary of Modena singularly excels: "Greatness is indeed

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<sup>54</sup> The autor also discusses his ambition in the epistle to the reader, explaining that he wished to dedicate one of his works to the princess: "I shall not be asham'd to own, that my chieftest Motive, was the Ambition which I acknowledg'd in the Epistle. I was desirous to lay at the feet of so Beautiful and Excellent a Princess, a Work which I confess was unworthy her, but which I hope she will have the goodness to forgive" (86).

communicated to some few of both Sexes, but Beauty is confin'd to a more narrow compass: 'Tis only in Your Sex, 'tis not shar'd by many, and its Supreme Perfection is in You alone" (82). The poet asserts the dedicatee's superiority over the rest of her sex: "The Prize of Beauty was disputed only till You were seen; but now all Pretenders have withdrawn their Claims" (82).<sup>55</sup> The praise of beauty, which is made the pillar of the divinisation of the duchess, takes up the central part of Dryden's panegyric. As is usually the case, the author starts by expressing the difficulty in providing an accurate description of the duchess—"I confess my self too weak for the Inspiration" (81)—and expands on this idea by indirectly comparing his addressee to the Moon and himself to a humble observer who can only give an account from afar: "Like those who have survey'd the Moon by Glasses, I can only tell of a new and shining World above us, but not relate the Riches and Glories of the Place" (82). The simile allows him to introduce the imagery of light and radiance which is typically associated with the divinity in Neoplatonic language, but also to emphasise the asymmetrical relationship which exists between the devotee and the deity (as between playwright and dedicatee): "To hope to be a God, is folly exalted into madness: but by the Laws of our Creation we are oblig'd to Adore him; and are permitted to love him too, at Humane distance" (83). Beauty and rank are presented as inextricably linked, as the poet gives a providential interpretation to the lady's elevated position:

Fortune has, indeed, but render'd Justice to so much Excellence, in setting it so high to publick view: or rather Providence has done Justice to it self, in placing the most perfect Workmanship of Heaven, where it may be admir'd by all Beholders. Had the Sun and Stars been seated lower, their Glory had not been communicated to all at once. (82)

Dryden elaborates on the association between his addressee and the divinity by highlighting not only the veneration she elicits, but also her beneficent effect on mankind: "You are never seen but You are blest: and I am sure You bless all those who see You. We think not the Day is long enough when we behold You: And You are so much the business of our Souls, that while You are in sight, we can neither look nor think on any else" (82-83).

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<sup>55</sup> These words seem to allude to the Judgement of Paris, a classical theme that implicitly likens the patroness to the goddess of love. According to the Greek myth, Paris was charged to judge whether Hera, Athena or Aphrodite was the most beautiful, awarding a golden ball to the winner, Aphrodite, who had offered him the love of Helen of Sparta (Grimal, "Paris" 344-346).

This effect is explained by the poet in terms of the Neoplatonic conception of beauty, which draws the beholders towards the divinity through love:

'Tis the nature of Perfection to be attractive; but the Excellency of the object refines the nature of the love. It strikes an impression of awful reverence; 'tis indeed that Love which is more properly a Zeal than Passion. . . . That extasie had need be strong, which without any end, but that of Admiration, has power enough to destroy all other Passions. (83)<sup>56</sup>

Praise of the addressee's beauty is also offered resorting to the Neoplatonic motif of the eyes. The playwright argues that the only reason why others have managed to resist her is the fact that they have not looked at her eyes: "Like despairing Combatants they strive against you as if they had beheld unveil'd, the Magical Shield of your Ariosto, which dazled the Beholders with too much brightness: they can no longer hold up their Arms, they have read their destiny in your Eyes" (84).<sup>57</sup> In line with the Neoplatonic identification between beauty and virtue, he sets the duchess as an example of righteousness, arguing that her physical perfection matches that of her soul. He makes the hyperbolic claim that body and soul in her are almost the same substance and that, therefore, her spirit need not yearn for heaven, since it can hardly be exalted by shedding its fleshly covering:

your Person is a Paradise, and your Soul a Cherubin within to guard it. If the excellence of the outside invite the Beholders, the Majesty of your Mind deters them from too bold approaches; and turns their Admiration into Religion. . . . Your Person is so admirable, that it can scarce receive addition, when it shall be glorify'd: and your Soul, which shines thorough it, finds it of a substance so near her own, that she will be pleas'd to pass an Age within it, and to be confin'd to such a Palace. (84)

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<sup>56</sup> Dryden compares the contemplation of beauty to the devotion of hermits, whose connection with the divinity causes them to feel contempt for earthly things and fills them with happiness, and he implies that the duchess's acceptance of the dedication has commanded a similar allegiance in him: "'Tis the rapture which Anchorites find in Prayer, when a Beam of the Divinity shines upon them: that which makes them despise all worldly objects, and yet 'tis all but contemplation. They are seldom visited from above; but a single vision so transports them, that it makes up the happiness of their lives" (83).

<sup>57</sup> Dryden quotes the exact fragment from Ariosto in which the glare of the magic shield is described and he compares its splendour to Mary of Modena's eyes: "Splende lo Scudo a guisa di Piroppo; / E Luce altra non é tanto lucente: / Cader in terra a lo splendor fu d'vopo, / Con gli occhi abbacinati, e senza mente" ("the shield shines like a carbuncle and no glare shone more brightly; it is inevitable to fall to the ground because of the splendour, with dazzled eyes and losing consciousness"; 84: my translation).



The hyperbolic style characteristic of dedications allows the author to make claims that might elsewhere appear outrageous. Thus, when asserting the duchess's superiority over other court beauties, his eulogy suddenly acquires a political turn:

You render Mankind insensible to other Beauties: and have destroy'd the Empire of Love in a Court which was the seat of his Dominion. You have subverted (may I dare to accuse you of it) even our Fundamental Laws; and *Reign absolute over the hearts of a stubborn and Free-born people tenacious almost to madness of their Liberty.* (83, emphasis added)

Even though Dryden is referring to absolute monarchy as a metaphor for the tyranny of love and as such his words seem harmless, they are nonetheless revealing. While pretending to question absolutism ("may I dare to accuse you of it"), he is in fact legitimising absolute rule on the grounds of innate excellence, as he suggests that a "Free-born people" would willingly submit to it. Thus, his dedication to the duchess helps neutralise the most serious political criticism levelled at the couple.

As is often the case, Dryden adds the final touch to Mary of Modena's panegyric by praising the duke of York. In order to cement the relation of patronage and assert his political allegiance to the Yorks, Dryden stresses the qualities which the duke needed to be complimented on (courage, loyalty to the king and patriotism), as well as those which would prove beneficial to himself (generosity and magnanimity):

You are join'd to a Prince who only could deserve You: whose Conduct, Courage, and Success in War, whose Fidelity to His Royal Brother, whose Love for His Country, whose Constancy to His Friends, whose Bounty to His Servants, whose Justice to Merit, whose Inviolable Truth, and whose Magnanimity in all His Actions, seem to have been rewarded by Heaven by the gift of You. (82)

Like Dryden's epistle, Pordage's dedication of *The Siege of Babylon* (1678) to Modena abounds in motifs of divinisation, although no mention is made of the duke. The author introduces the idealisation of the duchess directly at the beginning representing her as a queen, while expressing fear and mentioning the awkwardness of praising her: "It is not without Fear, that I approach your *Throne*; esteeming it a more difficult task, to write an Epistle Dedicatory, than to make a Play" (A2, emphasis added). After establishing an intrinsic relation between wit and the court and alluding to the "encouragement of Princes,

who diffuse it [wit] like Light to all that know them” (A2v), he resorts to the topos of the stars, praising Mary’s intellect and placing her above everything else:

your Royal Highness, as a Star of the first Magnitude, shines, with the splendour of your Mind, and enlightens the Souls of others. I need not fear to be accus’d of Flattery, since you are a Theme too high, all we can say, is still below you, and there can be no such Figure as Hyperbole in your description. (A2v-A3)

Pordage continues to amplify the panegyric of Modena, attributing to her all the virtues expected of a lady of her rank, explaining how these have aroused his admiration and therefore justifying the epistle:

When I consider all your excellencies, I approach you, with admiration, and am swallow’d up in the Sea of your perfections. Your Beauty, your Extraction, your Wit, Ingenuity, and acquired parts; your Goodness, Piety, Wisdom, and Generosity, with all your other Virtues, and Accomplishments; deserve each a particular Panegyric, and are large Themes, on which the greatest Wits, may exercise their Pens. (A3)

The last play which Mary of Modena was addressed, Otway’s *The Orphan* (1680), contains several tropes of idealisation which are applied to the dedicatee as well as the duke. The dedication functions as a public endorsement of the duke of York, which was opportunely given in the trying time of his exile in Scotland. The divinisation of the duchess is implicitly introduced when the playwright comments on the impossibility of offering her a worthy piece. He idealises the duchess and portrays himself as being prostrated at her feet, explaining that it would have been a sin not to dedicate to her a work that has been well received:

After having a great while wisht to write something that might be worthy to lay at your Highnesses Feet, and finding it impossible: Since the World has been so kind to me to Judge of this Poem to my advantage, as the most pardonable fault which I have made in its kind; I had sinn’d against my self, if I had not chosen this Opportunity to implore (what my Ambition is most fond of) your Favour and Protection. (3)

Otway builds on this topic insisting on the uniqueness of Modena’s virtues, particularly her beauty, while humbly comparing himself to an untalented painter who attempts to draw her portrait: “the description of Vertues, and Perfections so rare as yours

are, ought to be done by as deliberate, as skillful a Hand. . . And your Vertue can receive no more Lustre from Praises, than your Beauty can be improv'd by Art; which as it Charms the bravest Prince that ever amaz'd the World with his Virtue" (4). At the end of the previous fragment, the author implicitly introduces the encomium of the duke of York, which he subsequently amplifies stressing his military abilities, presenting the love of Mary of Modena as a blessing for him and immortalising his patroness:

Your Love too, as none but that *great Heroe* who has it could deserve it, and therefore, by a particular Lot from Heav'n, was destin'd to so extraordinary a blessing, so matchless for itself, and so wondrous for it's Constancy, shall be remembred to your Immortal Honour, when all other Transactions of the Age you live in shall be forgotten. (4-5, emphasis added)

A dedicatory epistle to a female member of the royal family can in itself serve as an acknowledgement of the author's political sympathies, without making reference to any male relative. This is the case of Banks's dedication of *The Unhappy Favourite* (1682) to Anne Stuart, which was offered in the highly charged context of the Exclusion Crisis. Being identified as "Daughter to His Royal Highness" (A2), the dedicatee is fully idealised, as expected of a lady of her rank. However, the fact that there is no further reference to the duke (together with the playwright's subsequent choices of dedicatees) suggests that Banks intends to align himself with the princess rather than her father. The panegyric of Anne Stuart is as usual introduced through the topos of fear and the impossibility of finding fit language to praise her: "I tremble to express my Thanks in so mean Language, but much more when I wou'd pay my Tribute of just Praises to your Highness" (A2v). The dramatist connects this theme to the divinisation of the dedicatee, extolling her beauty: "'tis not to be attempted by any Pen, Heaven has done it to a *Miracle* in Your own Person, where are Written so many admirable Characters, such Illustrious Beauties on a Body so *Divinely* fram'd, that there is none so dull and ignorant, that cannot read 'em plainly" (A2v, emphasis added). Banks continues the idealisation by mentioning again the respect which she produces, placing her above her admirers and adding the trope of immortality through a reference to classical poets and painters: "And when You vouchsafe to cast your Eyes on those beneath You, they speak their own Excellencies with greater Art and Eloquence, and attract more Admiration than ever Virgil did in his Divinest Flight of Fancy, then Ovid in speaking of his Princess, or Appelles in drawing of his Venus" (A2v). The divinisation of

Princess Anne is completed through the topics of sacredness and profanation with an allusion to the Jewish Temple, which the dramatist uses to emphasise again his reverence towards her:

the awful Genius of your Highness bids me beware how I come too near, lest I Prophane so many Incomparable Perfections in so Sacred a Shrine as your Highness Person, where You ought to be ador'd, and not seen: For, like the Antient Jews in their Religious Worship, 'tis a Favour for me to remain on the outward steps, and not approach nigh the Vail where the Crowd never come. (A2v-A3)

Despite the consistent use of the motifs of divinisation in the dedications of this category, authors adapted these tropes to their particular needs, which are determined by the play itself, the social status of the dedicatee, as well as the author's own assessment of his symbolic capital. For instance, in the dedication of *St Cecily* (1666), which is described on its title-page as a "Christian tragedy," Medbourne does not divinise Catherine of Braganza on account of her beauty but rather her righteousness, calling her "a Greatnesse surrounded with Goodnesse" and "an equal transcendency of Power and Piety" (A2). The actor-playwright justifies the offering of the play to Queen Catherine by praising her as a model of Christian virtues: "For, where should Innocency, Vertue Piety, and all the other amazing heights of Christian life, expect to be more kindly entertain'd, than where they are in the highest degree practis'd?" (A2v). Instead of complimenting the queen directly, which might be interpreted as flattery or even an affront to her humility, Medbourne argues that, although he is not worthy of her patronage, his plot and characters are. They provide exalted examples of the religious ethic the queen herself embodies:

Madame, when I finde represented in this Small Piece, the Triumphs of Divine Love over all the most alluring Concerns of Sublunary Happinesse; When I reflect on a tender Virginitie, defying all the charming enjoyments of this World, nay what's most harsh to the delicacy of the fair sex, Torture; When I see enflam'd Youth, by an Heroick contempt, spurning the greatest Pleasures, to court the Cross of Christ: When I observe the sudden, yet efficacious Operations of that Winde which bloweth where it listeth, converting a Saul into a Paul, a Persecutor into a Sufferer: And lastly, when I consider, how the want of an humble Perseverance (like an unexpected Wrack within the Port) made way to the Apostasie of one ready to lay hold on the Crown of Martyrdom: When these Reflexions fill my thoughts, how should I conceive any Patronage too great for so great Examples. (A2-A2v)

Authors derive symbolic value from the excellence of their patronesses, which establishes the merit of the plays and their own. Since their worth is also measured in terms of the past interest of the dedicatees in the publication, dramatists expose the instances of support and encouragement that they have received from them. Despite having already written three plays for the Duke's Company, in the dedication of *Calisto* (1675) to Princess Mary Crowne presents himself as an almost anonymous playwright and stresses his surprise at receiving the royal commission, which he metaphorises as a godsend:

Being unexpectedly called out of my Obscurity, to the glory of serving your Highness, (and indeed the whole Court) in an entertainment so considerable as this; my fears and amazements were such as (I believe) shepherds and herdsmen had of old, when from their flocks and herds they were call'd to prophesie to Kings. . . . Fain would I have shrunk back again into my former shades, and hid my self in my native obscurity; but fearing to dispute with oracles, and resist Heavenly Powers, I adventur'd on dangerous obedience, knowing that if I must perish, it was better to perish a Martyr, than a Criminal. (232)

In this manner, Crowne again highlights the superiority of the princess and the royal family. Moreover, he characterises himself as a loyal subject paying his duty and expresses hopes of being favoured by his patroness and her family: "But recollecting my self, I remembered that Divine commands were Presages rather of Favour than Ruin; that when Heaven pressed any to his wars, he gave them courage, as well as pay. This made me hope, that in the glorious work to which I was called, I should be inspired" (232). The dramatist portrays himself as a courtier-playwright and attempts to use the support of the court and the recognition gained in this milieu to boost his career in the commercial theatre.<sup>58</sup>

Whenever possible, authors took advantage of their relation with the patroness, as for example Etherege in the dedication of *The Man of Mode* (1676) to Mary of Modena. The dramatist introduces himself as being in the service of the duchess when apologising for addressing her: "I hope the honour I have of belonging to You, will excuse my presumption. 'Tis the first thing I have produc'd in Your Service, and my Duty obliges me to what my Choice durst not else have aspir'd" (2: 183). He continues by thanking Modena presumably

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<sup>58</sup> The success of *Calisto* most probably encouraged Crowne to compose a prototypical Restoration comedy, *The Countrey Wit* (1675), which was, in all likelihood, produced by the Duke's in Spring 1675 (Van Lennep 231).

for favouring the premiere by inviting other members of the court and he hopes that her protection will also benefit his play in print: “I am very sensible, Madam, how much it is beholding to Your Indulgence, for the success it had in the Acting, and Your Protection will be no less fortunate to it in the Printing; for all are so ambitious of making their Court to You, that none can be severe to what you are pleas’d to favour” (2: 183). Given that Etherege appears to have entered the service of the Yorks, he adopts a deferential attitude, though not overly humble. The reason why he could take this licence was his overall recognition as a court wit. Moreover, by depicting his patroness as being sought by courtiers, he also brings recognition to the duchess, which she could use to enhance her prestige.

The majority of authors exhibit a most humble attitude, for this is a characteristic strategy of the genre of dedications used to emphasise the social difference between dramatists and patronesses and to heighten the panegyric. Humility is generally shown through the topos of the trifle or the divertissement, which Crowne, Dryden, Pordage, Cooke and Otway employed to belittle their works when requesting patronage. In the dedication of *Calisto* (1675) to Princess Mary, Crowne openly claims: “this Poem savours too little of inspiration, and too much of my own weak unassisted self” (233). The poet attempts to justify himself and invalidate any potential criticism by arguing that he was not given enough time to write the masque, but in doing so he still displays confidence in his talent: “I will not pretend, that I have materials in me to have formed a poem of such perfection as so great an occasion required; but I am certain I could have written something more worthy of your Highness’ favour, and the great honour to which this was preferred, had I had time enough allowed me to ripen my conceptions” (233).<sup>59</sup> Crowne takes pride on his masque because it had been widely acclaimed by the court, but he downplays his accomplishment humorously presenting himself as the worst dramatist who could have

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<sup>59</sup> Crowne also insists on the scarce time he was allotted to write the masque and excuses his lack of quality in the address to the reader: “Under all these difficulties did this poor poem labour even before it was an embrio, and when sleeping in its causes; and when in the womb it was squeez’d, and hinder’d of its due growth by intolerable strait lacings; and lastly, forced on an immature and hasty birth; by all which inconveniences, it was impossible it should prove otherwise than a weak, lean, ricketty, deformed piece, and as such (notwithstanding the kindness it received from others,) it was looked on by me; and accordingly I was impatient till I had strangled it, and in the room produced something less imperfect, something of a constitution strong enough to endure the blows of its enemies, and of a complexion beautiful enough to delight its parents and friends, and such a thing (in some low degree at least) this is which you see” (238).

been chosen, in order to underline his gratefulness to the princess and probably to forestall any rivalry with Dryden:

she [Fortune] knew there was no need of excellence in a Writer, when there was so much in you; and since the best of Writers would not have appeared considerable, indulged her humour in selecting the worst: a favour which in many respects exalts me above all my Contemporaries, and will make the world judge me, though not the best, the happiest Writer of the age. (234)

Dryden likewise adopts a humble stance in the epistle of *The State of Innocence* (1677) in order to further praise Mary of Modena and minimise the possibility of being mocked by fellow playwrights. He apologises to the duchess for the weaknesses of his play and his boldness in offering it to her: “Be pleas’d then, Madam, to receive this Poem, without Intituling so much Excellency as yours, to the faults and imperfections of so mean a Writer: And instead of being favourable to the Piece, *which merits nothing*, forgive the presumption of the Author” (85, emphasis added). Most probably, Dryden pretends to minimize his literary prowess so as to avoid being ridiculed by jealous rivals. Even though *The State of Innocence* had been read in manuscript and the printed edition could capitalise on the popularity of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* (which had gone through seven editions already), Dryden must have been aware that the non-performance of his piece had slightly diminished its symbolic capital and that he needed to compensate with increased humbleness.

Similarly, in the dedication of *The Siege of Babylon* (1678) to Modena, Pordage points to the insignificance of his offering, resorting to the topos of the divertissement: “it is . . . my business only, to crave your acceptance of this Poem, which may serve for a diversion when wearied with more serious Thoughts” (A3). He then explains his suit for patronage on the grounds of his lack of talent and the widespread criticism of wit in the age: “There is some necessity for me, to gain so powerful a Patroness, considering the smallness of my Merits, and the niceness of this Critical Age, in which the greatest Wits pass not without Censure, nor the most perfect pieces of humane Invention, without being carp’d at” (A2v).

In the dedication of *Love’s Triumph* (1678), Cooke also addresses Princess Mary with great humility: he belittles his literary skills and acknowledges the hierarchical social

distance between them, picturing himself prostrated at her feet, an image which is linked to the divinisation of the dedicatee:

The knowledge I have of my own weakness in things of this nature, together with that awful Respect which ought to be had in all such neer approaches to Sacred Majesty, might very reasonably have dash'd in me the first thoughts of this extream presumption of lifting up my eyes to Your Highness; and so in truth those considerations had: but that I was reliev'd by the power of that excessive Clemency, which has ever appear'd most Familiar in You, and which indeed seems to be Natural and Hereditary to all of the Royal Circle.  
(A2)

Cooke then seeks the princess's forgiveness for his ambition, although he claims that she had approved of the dedication; he also uses the topos of the trifle and expands on the divinisation of the dedicatee: "'Tis from that, Madam, I hope to obtain of Your Highness my Pardon, for [otherwise] so inexcusable an Arrogance; since it was Your infinite Goodness that gave me leave in this mean trifle to pay You the Religion of my Zeal" (A2v).<sup>60</sup>

In the dedication of *The Orphan* (1680) to Modena, Otway also resorts to the topos of the divertissement to assert his loyalty to the Yorks: "I cannot but declare it was my design and hopes it might have been your Divertissement in that happy season, when you return'd again to cheer all those eyes that had before wept for your Departure, and enliven all hearts that had droopt for your Absence" (3). The dramatist belittles his tragedy comparing it to the widow's mite (Luke 21: 1-4) and characterises himself as a poor poet, while insisting again on his Toryism and implicitly alluding to the favourable reception of the tragedy in the playhouse:

When Wit ought to have pay'd it's Choicest Tributes in, and Joy have known no Limits, then I hop'd my little Mite would not have been rejected; though my ill Fortune was too hard for me, and I lost a greater Honour, by your Royal Highnesses Absence, than all the Applauses of the World besides can make me Reparation for. (3)

Despite the considerable success of *The Orphan*, Otway might have assumed that he was expected to show humbleness for being a professional playwright who had started his career as an actor. Significantly, Otway portrays himself as a poor poet to reaffirm his support of the Tory cause, while appealing to the duchess to intercede in his favour before the duke: "I

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<sup>60</sup> The word in brackets appears originally in the epistle.



would beg, and hope it may be granted, that I may through yours never want an Advocate in his Favour, whose Heart, and Mine, you have so entire a share in; it is my only Portion and my Fortune; I cannot but be happy, so long as I have but hopes I may enjoy it, and I must be Miserable, should it ever be my ill Fate to lose it” (5).

Even though Medbourne does not use the topos of the trifle and its variants, he adopts a humble tone when addressing Queen Catherine in his dedication of *St Cecily* (1666), as was certainly expected, given the pre-eminence of his dedicatee and the fact that he was an actor. He begins by stressing the social divide between them: “There is so great a distance between the Meanness of a Comedian, and the Majesty of a Crown’d Head, that the presumption of this Address may occasion some, to charge me with an Oblivion of the former, and want of reverence to the Sacrednesse of the latter” (A2). In order to emphasise the divinisation of his dedicatee, Medbourne resorts to the language of religion calling himself a humble “Supplyant” (A2) and wishing that she might “though at a great distance shed some providential Graces” upon him (A2v).

Given the supremacy of their addressees, most dramatists also adopt a modest stance when appealing for patronage and protection, a theme which is expressed through the topos of the hero and the poor poet. Examples of these can be found in the epistles written by Crowne, Pordage, Cooke and Banks. For instance, in the dedication of *Calisto* (1675) to Princess Mary, Crowne personifies his work, which becomes an extension of himself, and he alludes to the corporal works of mercy while divinising his dedicatee:<sup>61</sup>

[the play] is now condemned to want and nakedness, to starve under the cold wind of censure, to all the sufferings that the native of a rich and happy soil must expect when banished to cold and barbarous Regions. In this condition, forced by its misery, and bound by the duty of a Creature, it makes this humble sacrifice of itself to your Highness, to beg such a share of your Protection and Favour as may enable it to live in a condition becoming a creature which had once the Honor to be so near to you, and to receive such particular Graces from you. (234-235)

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<sup>61</sup> The first six of the seven corporal works of mercy are found in the Last Judgement sermon in Matthew 25:34-35 (these were later expanded to include burying the dead). Here Crowne alludes to three of them: feeding the hungry (1), clothing the naked (3) and harbouring the stranger (4). See Cross, “Corporal Works of Mercy” 349.

Moreover, Crowne exhibits humility by inverting the topos of the monument because, rather than referring to the epistle as an enduring depiction of the dedicatee, he restates his gratefulness to the princess for having made him immortal with her commission: “Your Highnesses Favor will yet make it spend its dayes in Honor, revive with pleasure the remembrance of the past Glories, and give an immortality, not only to this poor Poem, but to the (otherwise) most obscure name of, Madam, Your Highness’ most humble and most devoted Servant, John Crowne” (235). In this manner, the playwright uses the strategy of humility to reaffirm his gratitude, being certainly aware that the commission of *Calisto* will promote his career in the commercial theatre.

In the epistle of *The Siege of Babylon* (1678) to Mary of Modena, Pordage employs the trope of the heroine to express his wish that the duchess will accept the play: “Statira flings her self at the feet of your Royal Highness, and hopes you will give her a favourable Reception” (A3). The dramatist continues to allude to the plot and characters of the tragedy and requests Modena’s recommendation, arguing that only she can protect his work against critics: “I have sav’d the Persian Princesses from the Cruelty of Roxana, but ’tis you only, Madam, that can protect them, from the greater Tyranny of Criticks, such as make it their business to find fault, with what they cannot mend, who turn the greatest sence into Ridicule, and Burlesque even the Vertues, and the Graces themselves” (A3). Pordage develops the theme of protection and combines his petition with the motif of the monument, claiming that the duchess’s name and the admiration it arouses will prevent negative opinions on the play: “On this Rock, I may now seem to run, and to have left my self no excuse, for daring to set your Great Name before my Poem. But, Madam, ’tis to your Goodness I must fly; and that favourable protection, which you afford those who want it, must shield me from the envenom’d Darts, of envious Detractors” (A2v). While displaying humbleness, Pordage reminds readers that the inclusion of the dedication was a sign of approval from the duchess and attempts thus to influence their judgement: “They will have Veneration for your Name, and stand in awe, when they shall know you have seen, and approv’d this Play, that you have taken it into your Protection, and that it is not without your permission, I offer it to your Highness” (A2v). Due to the work’s lack of originality and the low symbolic capital it had raised on the stage, Pordage needed to express a certain satisfaction with it and make the most of the fact that he had won Modena’s support.

In the dedication of *Love's Triumph* (1678) to Mary Stuart, Cooke solicits her approval through the topos of the hero and heroine, Orodantes and Statira. The author underlines the indispensability of the princess's patronage, arguing that the tragedy had not been staged and, particularly, because her protection would discourage his detractors. Once again, Cooke seizes the opportunity to divinise the dedicatee and assert her superiority through the use of religious language:

Be pleas'd then to receive this Poem (an absolute stranger to the World, being never yet seen upon the publick Theatre) with that Generosity and Grace You are always ready to bestow upon the Unfortunate and Fair: and such Your Highness knows were Oroondates and Statira, who now being forc'd again from the peaceful Shades of their happy Retirement, do throw themselves at Your Princely Feet, with the Reverence and Humility of Idolaters, devoutly begging their Protection might be in Your Highness's Umbrage, as in the only place where they can best be secur'd from the envy, if I may not venture to say, malice of persecuting Censors: being sure that no outrages dare then be committed upon them by any of the most malignant, when once Your Highness shall please to take upon You the interest of their preservation. (A2v)

Both this insistence on the idealisation of the princess and his own humility were all the more necessary to compensate for the fact that Cooke had not derived value from the commercial stage. Undoubtedly, the author must have known that the dedicatee's acceptance of the offering was the only asset at his disposal to propitiate his readers.

As for Banks, the dramatist is very concise when soliciting Princess Anne's protection in the epistle of *The Unhappy Favourite* (1682). He resorts to the motif of the hero while depicting the princess as being compassionate and himself as grateful: "I Humbly lay before your Highness Feet an Unhappy Favourite, but 'tis in Your Power to make him no longer so" (A2). Banks seizes the opportunity to exploit the audience's positive response to his piece, in order to demonstrate the symbolic capital he had achieved: "Those who cou'd scarce behold him on the Stage without weeping, when they shall see him thus exalted, will all turn envious of his Fortune, which they can never think deplorable while he is grac'd by your Highness" (A2). Even though *The Unhappy Favorite* had been well received, the dramatist must have felt that his position in the field was precarious and that he should endeavour to obtain further recognition. Moreover, by offering the play to Princess Anne, he could ingratiate himself with Whiggish theatre-goers. At the same time,

the dedication would perhaps serve to improve Anne's popularity at the time when she was paying a visit to her father during his exile.

On the other hand, dramatists would sometimes take a proud stance when justifying the request for patronage and playfully allude to the ambition of writers in order to compensate for their presumption. For instance, in the dedication to *The Man of Mode* (1676), Etherege argues that he is going to be accused of vanity for dedicating his comedy to Mary of Modena: "Poets however they may be modest otherwise, have always too good an opinion of what they write. The World when it sees this Play Dedicated to Your Royal Highness, will conclude, I have more than my share of that Vanity" (2: 183). In this manner he attempts to avert criticism while at the same time he implicitly acknowledges that he has good reasons to be satisfied with his comedy, because of the recognition it was given by the court.

A similar case can be found in Dryden's dedication of *The State of Innocence* (1677) to Modena. The dramatist excuses the presumption of his epistle by wittily arguing that ambition is a requisite for authors to succeed: "Ambition is so far from being a Vice in Poets, that 'tis almost impossible for them to succeed without it. Imagination must be rais'd, by a desire of Fame, to a desire of Pleasing" (81). This might have been intended as another strategy to compensate for the fact that his piece had not been staged. Other than showing humility to prevent being ridiculed, Dryden also needed to express a certain sense of achievement to convince readers that the play was nonetheless worthy of the duchess's patronage and thus boost his own capital.

#### **4.1.2 The extended royal family**

Despite not being formally members of the royal family, Anna Scott, duchess of Monmouth, and Isabella Fitzroy, duchess of Grafton, also received dedications in this period. Being married to the king's natural sons James Scott and Henry Fitzroy, respectively, Anna and Isabella possessed social and symbolic capital. As for the dedicators, they were all professional playwrights, except for Sir Robert Stapylton and Edward Ecclestone. Table 2 outlines the information relating to these dedications.

Table 2: Dedications addressed to members of the extended royal family in Charles II's reign

Dedicator, play	Dedicatee
Dryden, <i>The Indian Emperour</i> (1667)	Anna Scott, duchess of Monmouth and duchess of Buccleuch in her own right, consort of James Scott
Stapylton, <i>The Tragedie of Hero and Leander</i> (1669)	
Settle, <i>Cambyses</i> (1671)	
Ecclestone, <i>Noah's Flood</i> (1679)	
de La Roche-Guilhen, <i>Rare en tout</i> (1677)	Isabella Fitzroy, duchess of Grafton, consort of Henry FitzRoy

### Dedicatees and dedicators

Anna Scott was one of the preferred dedicatees during Charles II's reign, not only because her husband was the king's eldest son and was pursuing a military career, but also because she was duchess of Buccleuch in her own right and they both had a liking for the theatre.<sup>62</sup> The Scotts were one of the oldest and richest families in Scotland.<sup>63</sup> Anna (1651-1732) had become countess of Buccleuch in 1661, as a result of the deaths of her father and elder sisters. The fact that the Buccleuch estate was entailed and that the next heir, Anna's aunt, was married to a Buccleuch creditor made the marriage of the countess a crucial question (Nicholson).<sup>64</sup> In May 1661 Anna's mother put forward a marriage proposal between her daughter and the king's natural son by Lucy Walter, James Crofts

<sup>62</sup> The Buccleuch family was one of the oldest and wealthiest in Scotland, the estate being worth some £10,000 per year (T. Harris, "Scott").

<sup>63</sup> The history of the Scotts dated back to at least the late thirteenth century, when Richard Scott, the possessor of the manor house of Buccleuch, swore allegiance to King Edward I, the English monarch who invaded Scotland and claimed suzerainty over the kingdom (M. Lee, *The Heiresses* 4). Anna's great grandfather, Walter Scott, commander of a Scottish regiment in the Netherlands in the service of Prince Maurice of Orange, received the states of the forfeited earl of Bothwell (scattered from Dumfriesshire to Berwickshire) in 1594, for pacifying the Borders (M. Lee, *The Heiresses* 5).

<sup>64</sup> Anna's uncle, the earl of Tweeddale launched several attempts at seizing the estate, for Anna and her sisters were the only persons who stood between his wife and the Buccleuch inheritance and the cancellation of his debts (M. Lee, *The Heiresses* 22). Charles II had the marriage contract ratified in the Scottish parliament on 5 October 1663; this meant that Anna's father's entail (which prevented Monmouth from inheriting the Buccleuch estate if he outlived her) had to be nullified (M. Lee, *The Heiresses* 85). For a detailed analysis of the entail of the Buccleuch estate and the marriage contract, see M. Lee "The Buccleuch Marriage Contract."

(Nicholson).<sup>65</sup> In preparation for the marriage, James was brought from Paris to London by Queen Henrietta Maria in August 1662, took the surname of Scott and was knighted as such in the autumn (Hibbard; Cokayne 9: 60-61). On 14 February 1663 James was created duke of Monmouth, earl of Doncaster and baron of Tynedale and nominated as knight of the Garter on 28 March Cokayne 9: 61).<sup>66</sup> The marriage was celebrated on 20 April 1663 and on that same day Monmouth was created duke of Buccleuch, earl of Dalkeith and Lord Scott of Whitchester and Eskdale, the letter patent explicitly acknowledging him as a natural son to the king (Cokayne 9: 61). Anna Scott was created duchess of Buccleuch and Monmouth on 16 January 1666 (Cokayne 9: 62). The marriage, which turned unhappy due to the duke's repeated infidelities, produced six children of whom only two survived and lasted in conjugal terms until 1679 (Nicholson).

James and Anna Scott became active figures in the cultural milieu of the court, for they shared an interest in dancing and theatrical entertainments. For instance, on 2 February 1665 they both participated in an unknown masque and on 4 February 1668 the duchess played one of the leading roles and was chosen to speak the prologue in the amateur production of Katherine Philips and John Denham's *Horace* (Van Lennep 86-87, 128-129). Moreover, on 25 November 1669 the duke of Monmouth acquired a patent for a touring company under the management of Captain Edward Bedford, the former manager of Thomas Killigrew's nursery (Van Lennep 165).<sup>67</sup> The fact that the duke owned a touring company must have encouraged dramatists to dedicate their works to the Monmouths, as certainly did the annuities that the king granted to his eldest son.<sup>68</sup> Monmouth received dedications by Richard Head (*Hic et Ubique*, 1663), Sir Robert Stapylton (*The Slighted Maid*, 1663) and John Dryden (*Tyrannick Love*, 1670), and the last two dramatists also

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<sup>65</sup> James had been conceived during a brief visit of his father to The Hague in July 1648. After his mother's death in 1658, he was sent to Paris and placed in the care of Lord Crofts, a gentleman of Charles's bedchamber, whose surname he adopted (T. Harris, "Scott").

<sup>66</sup> Monmouth was given precedence over all dukes, except for the duke of York (Cokayne 9: 61).

<sup>67</sup> The Duke of Monmouth's Company appeared in Norwich in 1673 and at Stourbridge Fair in 1676 and, according to Kenneth M. Cameron, it could have been active for a total of ten years (93-94).

<sup>68</sup> In 1662 Monmouth was granted a licence to export all new drapery, which yielded him some £8000 annually; from 1665 he received an annual pension of £6000 (which was increased to £8000 in 1673) and from 1667 he also obtained an allowance of £4000 to cover the expenses of entertaining the king at his lodgings (T. Harris, "Scott").

dedicated works to the duchess, who was addressed a total of four epistles: Dryden's *The Indian Emperour* (1667), Stapylton's *Hero and Leander* (1669), Settle's *Cambyses* (1671) and Ecclestone's *Noah's Flood* (1679).

Dryden's *The Indian Emperour* (1667), his first rhymed heroic play, was probably premiered in April 1665 and was meant to counteract Orrery's *Mustapha*, as Hume has suggested (*Development*, 247; see Van Lennep 87-88). It was conceived as a sequel to Dryden's collaborative play with Sir Robert Howard, *The Indian Queen*, which had enjoyed great success in January 1664 (see Van Lennep 74-75).<sup>69</sup> Despite the popularity of *The Indian Queen*, Dryden's new play did not have a long run, due to the spread of the plague in the spring of 1665, which resulted in the closure of the theatres from June 1665 until December 1666. Nevertheless, *The Indian Emperour* was revived in January 1667 (Van Lennep 100). The text was printed that year with a dedication to Anna Scott, in which Dryden claimed that the duchess had promoted the play. In fact, the Monmouths might have encouraged the court performance of *The Indian Emperour* celebrated on 13 January 1668 in which they both took part (Van Lennep 127).<sup>70</sup>

The second edition of *The Indian Emperour* also appeared in 1668 (most probably before November since it is not listed in the Term Catalogues) and Dryden seized this opportunity to praise the duke, identifying his patroness as "Wife to the most Illustrious, and High-born Prince James, Duke of Monmouth" (23).<sup>71</sup> Furthermore, in the epistle Dryden addresses the duchess as a member of the royal family ("the rank which you hold in the Royal Family," 23) and also divinises her and her husband. Dryden's patronage relation to the Monmouths was reinforced by the dedication to the duke of his second heroic play, *Tyrannick Love* (1670), which appears to have had a large success with fourteen

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<sup>69</sup> The connection between *The Indian Queen* and *The Indian Emperour* was advertised on the title-page of the latter (2). Dryden also included an explanatory text after the dedication (27-28).

<sup>70</sup> Pepys was told that "not any woman but Duchesse of Monmouth and Mrs Cornwallis [Baroness Cornwallis] did anything but like fools and sticks, but that these two did most extraordinary well" (9: 23-24).

<sup>71</sup> The original heading ran thus: "To the most Excellent, and most Illustrious Princess Anne, Dutchess of Monmouth, countess of Bucclugh, &c." (A2). Dryden also slightly changed the text of the dedication for the second edition.

performances on its first run (Van Lennep 162-163).<sup>72</sup> With the intention of presenting himself to his readers as a client to the Monmouths, Dryden began the epistle by expressing his gratitude to the duchess for her support of *The Indian Emperour*: “The favourable Reception which your Excellent Lady afforded to one of my former Plays, has encourag’d me to double my presumption, in addressing this to your Graces Patronage” (107).

Sir Robert Stapylton took a different approach in his dedications to the Monmouths. Having been born into a staunch Roman Catholic family, Stapylton (c. 1607-1669) was educated in France and took monastic vows, although he converted to Protestantism in the late 1620s.<sup>73</sup> At the outbreak of the Civil War, Stapylton accompanied Charles I to Nottingham and was knighted there on 13 September 1642 (L. G. Kelly). Between the mid-1640s and early 1650s, Stapylton pursued a courtly career and published a considerable number of translations. He was appointed gentleman in ordinary of the privy chamber to Charles, Prince of Wales, to whom he dedicated *Pliny’s Panegyricke* (1644).<sup>74</sup> After the Restoration, Sir Robert Stapylton turned to drama, authoring three plays: *The Slighted Maid* (1663), *The Step-Mother* (1664), and *The Tragedie of Hero and Leander* (1669).<sup>75</sup> The first was produced by the Duke’s Company in February 1663 and there was at least another performance that season, in May (Van Lennep 62, 65).<sup>76</sup> The play appeared in print the same year with a dedicatory epistle to the duke of Monmouth, showing in the heading that he had recently been created a knight of the Garter (20 April).<sup>77</sup> Moreover, the edition

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<sup>72</sup> Dryden’s address to the duke highlighted his parentage: “To the most Illustrious and High-born Prince, James Duke of Monmouth and Buccugh” (107). The play is recorded in the Term Catalogue for 22 November 1670 (Arber 1: 56).

<sup>73</sup> In 1621 Stapylton entered the Benedictine monastery of St Gregory, at Douai, and was professed in March 1625. Four years later he was granted permission to return to England for health reasons, but when summoned to St Gregory’s, he remained in England (L. G. Kelly).

<sup>74</sup> According to L. G. Kelly, it was probably through the mediation of his cousin Henry Pierrepont, marquess of Dorchester, that Stapylton was granted the office. Stapylton dedicated to Pierrepont *The first six satyrs of Juvenal* (1644) and *De bello Belgico . . .* (1650).

<sup>75</sup> Another play by Stapylton entitled *The Royal Choice* was entered in the Stationers’ Register on 29 November 1653, but it is now lost (L. G. Kelly; Harbage 152).

<sup>76</sup> These performances were recorded by Pepys, who was not particularly enthusiastic, although he liked the acting: “the play is not very excellent, but is well acted” (4: 163). Pepys saw it a third time in July 1668 (see Van Lennep 139).

<sup>77</sup> The heading runs: “To the Illustrious Prince, James Duke of Monmouth, &c. Knight of the most Noble Order of the Garter” (A2).



includes a prologue and an epilogue to King Charles which suggest that he attended a performance.<sup>78</sup> *The Step-Mother* was also staged by the Duke's, probably in October 1663, and there might have been a performance at court in December, for which the text was printed.<sup>79</sup> Stapylton's dramatic production might have contributed to foster his career at court, for on 10 November 1664 he was made gentleman usher to the privy chamber ("The Public Rooms"). Stapylton proudly exhibited his new appointment on the title-page of his next and last play, *Hero and Leander* (1669), which he dedicated to the duchess of Monmouth.<sup>80</sup> Nevertheless, contrary to Dryden, Stapylton did not mention the duke in the epistle and he addressed his patroness as a duchess, but not as the wife to the king's son.<sup>81</sup> If it were the case that the duke had already begun a love affair with Elizabeth Waller by then, Stapylton might have omitted him out of caution.<sup>82</sup>

The third dramatist who dedicated a play to Anna Scott was Elkanah Settle (1648-1724), the son of a barber and innkeeper from Dunstable, Hertfordshire. Settle was educated at Westminster School, as a king's scholar, before matriculating at Trinity College, Oxford, on 13 July 1666 (A. Williams). He left Oxford without taking a degree, moved to London and began to write for the stage. According to the antiquary Anthony à Wood, Settle wrote his maiden play, *Cambyses*, in collaboration with William Butler Fyfe, a fellow Oxford undergraduate (683).<sup>83</sup> This tragedy was first produced by the Duke's on 10 February 1671, "being perfectly well Acted" and running for "six Days with a full

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<sup>78</sup> The prologue is a celebration of the monarchy: "The Oil that Annointed you heal'd our sad wounds, / Your Laws have fix'd us in our old just Bounds. / When to your Throne you came, Justice return'd / From Heav'n, and on the Bench (o're which She mourn'd,) / Sits in your Splendour, gives (not takes) the Word" (A4).

<sup>79</sup> The printed version, which bears the licensing date December 26 1663 on the title-page, includes among the prefatory material a prologue "To the King at the Cockpit at Whitehall" (A3) and an epilogue "To the King" (N3v).

<sup>80</sup> It seems that *Hero and Leander* was not staged, for there are neither actors' names nor any formula referring to its production on the title-page, nor in the headings of the epilogue or the prologue.

<sup>81</sup> Stapylton used the terms of address corresponding to her rank, calling her: "Illustrious Princess," "Madam," "Your Grace" (n.p.).

<sup>82</sup> Elizabeth Waller gave birth to a daughter in 1669 (T. Harris, "Scott"). *Hero and Leander* was advertised in the Michaelmas Term Catalogue for 1668 (Arber 1: 3).

<sup>83</sup> Settle had previously composed *Mare clausum* (1666), a patriotic poem on the Second Anglo-Dutch War, which bore the initials "E.S." and the title "Gent." on the title page.

Audience,” according to the prompter Downes (61).<sup>84</sup> *Cambyses* appeared in print in 1671, going through four editions by 1692. In the dedication, the dramatist identified his patroness as “Wife to the most Illustrious, and High-born Prince, James, Duke of Monmouth” (A2), although he made no further reference to the duke.<sup>85</sup> The connection with the Monmouths and the success of his first work brought Settle in contact with other prominent members of the court, such as Rochester, Mulgrave and Norwich, which proved beneficial for his dramatic career.

The last dedication which Anna Scott received was Ecclestone’s *Noah’s Flood* (1679), a semi-opera in the style of *The State of Innocence*. The author was probably the son of William, of Charnock Richards, in Lancaster, who matriculated at Lincoln College on 3 July, 1663, and received his BA on 24 February 1666, before becoming rector of Old Swinford, Worcester, in 1673 (Foster 443).<sup>86</sup> *Noah’s Flood* is his only extant work and there is no evidence that it was staged. Despite Ecclestone’s efforts to raise his symbolic capital by adding a dedication as well as commendatory verses by Richard Saunders, John Leanerd, and John Norton, the play did not prove successful in print either, for the unsold sheets of the first edition were reissued in 1685 under the title of *The Cataclysm*. The fact that the text was first published in November 1679, at the onset of the Exclusion Crisis, and that it was dedicated to the duchess of Monmouth is a clear statement from Ecclestone, even though he did not allude to the duke.<sup>87</sup> Ecclestone might have avoided mentioning him in the epistle

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<sup>84</sup> Even though Downes incorrectly dated *Cambyses* in 1666, his comments on the production and reception were probably accurate (see Milhous and Hume’s remarks on the dating [J. Downes 59-60n168]). In fact, the tragedy was chosen to be acted in Oxford in July 1671, which suggests that it proved profitable (Van Lennep 183).

<sup>85</sup> Settle used the exact same phrasing as Dryden had in the second edition of *The Indian Emperour* (1668). Although he did not dedicate any of his subsequent plays to Monmouth, he did offer one to his mistress Henrietta Wentworth, which will be discussed in chapter 5.

<sup>86</sup> Ecclestone was probably a descendent of Edward Ecclestone, son to Henry Ecclestone, of Ecclestone, Lancaster (Flower 98). It is also relevant that he styled himself “Gent.” on the title-page of *Noah’s Flood*.

<sup>87</sup> *Noah’s Flood* was advertised for sale in the Michaelmas Term Catalogue for 1679 (Arber 1: 370).

out of respect for the duchess, particularly if they were already separated, but he does praise Monmouth in glowing terms in the preface.<sup>88</sup>

The other dedicatee in this group, Isabella Fitzroy (1667-1723), was the daughter and heir presumptive to Henry Bennet, lord Arlington, and his wife, Isabella.<sup>89</sup> Bennet held a prominent place at court, acting as secretary of state for the south from October 1662 until September 1674 (A. Marshall, "Bennet"). The Arlingtons gained further honour when Isabella was pre-contracted in marriage, in the presence of the court, to Henry Palmer (the king's second son by Barbara Palmer, duchess of Cleveland) on 1 August 1672, bride and groom being aged five and nine, respectively (Cokayne 6: 44).<sup>90</sup> Henry was subsequently advanced in rank, being made earl of Euston (the title was taken from Arlington's house in Suffolk) under the name of Fitzroy on 16 August and duke of Grafton on 11 September 1675 (Cokayne 6: 43).

The ten-year-old duchess of Grafton was offered a dedication by Anne de La Roche-Guilhen in 1677. The piece in question was *Rare en tout* ("All-Wondrous"), a *comédie-ballet* staged by a French troupe at Whitehall on the occasion of King Charles's birthday, on 29 May, and the text was printed to be sold right after its production (Van Lennep 257).<sup>91</sup> Anne de La Roche-Guilhen (1644-1707) was related on her mother's side to the Azémars, a wealthy and distinguished Huguenot family from Rouen (Cherbuliez 469).<sup>92</sup> Nevertheless, La Roche-Guilhen had to resort to translating and writing fiction due to economic need (her

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<sup>88</sup> Ecclestone presents Monmouth as an idealised ruler: "A Prince who like the Genius of this British Isle bears up the Fate thereof: A Prince who wears more Charms than ever Caesar did, for He does not only come, see, and overcome, Towns, Cities and Countreys, but enslaves the very hearts of Men, who are proud too, and triumph in their Chains, accounting it far great or glory to be overcome by Him, than to be Victors themselves of others" (A4v).

<sup>89</sup> Isabella van Berweerd was the daughter of Lodewyck van Nassau, the Dutch envoi to Britain at the Restoration. Lodewyck van Nassau was an illegitimate son of Prince Maurice of Orange and cousin to William II of Orange (A. Marshall, "Bennet").

<sup>90</sup> Arlington was elevated to earl of Arlington and viscount Thetford on 22 April 1672 and appointed a knight of the Garter on 15 June 1672 (Cokayne 1: 217), probably in preparation for Isabella's wedding to Henry FitzRoy, which took place less than four months later.

<sup>91</sup> The work was advertised in the Term Catalogue for 28 May 1677 (Arber 1: 276). The translation of the title has been given by Perry Gethner in *The Lunatic Lover; and other Plays by French Women of the 17th and 18th Centuries* (1994).

<sup>92</sup> Anne's family brimmed with literary connections, for instance, the poet Saint-Amant was her great uncle.

father would die impoverished in 1682). Anne sought the patronage of influential French noblewomen, notably her first romance, *Arioviste* (1674-1675), was dedicated to Marie-Anne Mancini, duchess of Bouillon, sister to Hortense Mancini, duchess Mazarin.<sup>93</sup> Perhaps through the influence of Bouillon, Anne travelled to London and gained access to Hortense's French expatriate community, which included the man of letters and amateur moralist Saint-Évremond.<sup>94</sup> While in London, Anne worked with various printer-booksellers to put on the market translations of her romances.

La Roche-Guilhen received the commission to compose *Rare en tout* from Arlington, who had become lord chamberlain in September 1674 (A. Marshall, "Bennet"). Since his daughter had probably been too young to play a part in *Calisto*, the ambitious courtier seized the opportunity presented by the king's birthday to offer him an entertainment built around Isabella (Walking 117-118).<sup>95</sup> It appears that Arlington assigned the organisation of the production to his friend Saint-Évremond, who may have recommended La Roche-Guilhen for librettist and Jacques Paisible as composer (Walking 117-118).<sup>96</sup> It is even possible that Anne coached young Isabella for the event, given that she was described as being the lady's governess in an edition of Saint-Évremond's works

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<sup>93</sup> Hortense Mancini (1646-1699) was one of the seven nieces of Cardinal Mazarin, the chief minister during Louis XIV's minority. After unsuccessfully requesting a formal separation through the French parliament or from the king, Hortense abandoned her squandering husband in 1668 (S. Nelson 4). She enjoyed the hospitality of her sister Marie-Anne and of the duke of Savoy before being invited to London by King Charles in December 1675 (S. Nelson 4-5). The invitation was said to have been prompted by Ralph Montague, ambassador extraordinary to France from 1669-1672, who probably did so with the intention of counteracting Kéroualle's influence (Hartmann, *Vagabond Duchess* 151).

<sup>94</sup> Duchess Mazarin established her residence near St. James's Palace, where she received the most distinguished authors, philosophers and politicians (S. Nelson 5). Hortense herself achieved popularity through the publications of her memoirs in 1675, which were translated into English the following year. As for La Roche-Guilhen, it is possible that she arrived in London as part of Mazarin's train (Walking 118).

<sup>95</sup> The celebration might also have coincided with the return of Henry FitzRoy from his sojourn in Paris in 1676-1677 (Davies "FitzRoy").

<sup>96</sup> Saint-Évremond knew La Roche-Guilhen well, as demonstrated by his correspondence to Charlotte Beverweerd, Arlington's sister-in-law.

(Walking 118).<sup>97</sup> The earl of Arlington had further reasons to support Mancini's protégés, for rumour had it that Hortense had ousted Louise de Kéroualle as royal mistress.<sup>98</sup> Arlington had entered into alliance with Mancini in order to estrange the king from Kéroualle, who had aligned herself with the earl's political opponent, the duke of Buckingham.<sup>99</sup> The earl had lost political influence in November 1674, when he failed to reach an agreement with William of Orange concerning his marriage to Princess Mary and other matters and in January 1675 it was rumoured that Arlington would be sent away to Ireland as lord lieutenant (A. Marshall, "Bennet"). Arlington required Mancini as his mediator to ingratiate himself with King Charles and he certainly hoped that a court entertainment starred by his daughter would remind the king and the court of their family alliance. The king's support was all the more necessary, because the duchess of Cleveland was said to have attempted to break the marriage, coveting for Grafton the more profitable hand of Lady Percy (Davies, "FitzRoy"). However, Charles maintained the original contract and on 6 November 1679 Isabella and Henry were remarried at Arlington's lodgings in Whitehall (Cokayne 6: 44).

## Dedications

Being members of wealthy and powerful noble families and spouses of two of King Charles's illegitimate children, Anna Scott and Isabella FitzRoy were addressed accordingly in the dedications that they received. The divinisation of the patronesses and the varied tropes of Neoplatonic literature occur in all epistles. However, these strategies are not consistently applied to their husbands because, while these ladies are regarded as being part of the royal family, explicit allusions to their husbands could turn problematic.

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<sup>97</sup> The list of characters features "Isabelle, Chanteuse Angloise (English singer)" (B1). This part was most certainly played by the duchess, not only because of the coincidence of the name and nationality, but also because this leading female role was only assigned some brief French songs. The reference to La Roche-Guilhen being Isabella's tutor, which is particularly imprecise, is included in a marginal note in Pierre des Maizeaux's edition of *Oeuvres Meslées de Mr. de Saint-Evremond* (233).

<sup>98</sup> Although the affair was never openly admitted, many at court, including Kéroualle, were convinced of the king's fondness for Mancini. For instance, at the opening of Parliament in February 1677, Hortense had stood behind the throne (Wynne, *The Mistresses* 48-49).

<sup>99</sup> Buckingham had been instrumental in making Kéroualle the king's mistress (see chapter 5, p. 149n19).

The four authors who offered their plays to Anna Scott made extensive use of the different techniques of idealisation. In the dedication to *The Indian Emperour* (1667), Dryden resorts to these tropes in an effort to emphasise the personal worth of the duchess of Buccleuch, presenting her attributes of beauty and goodness as her crowning glory: “Though the rank which you hold in the Royal Family, might direct the Eyes of a Poet to you, yet your beauty and goodness detain and fix them” (23). He develops the idealisation of the duchess through an implicit comparison with the Sun, a symbol of absolute monarchy. Her beauty makes her reign supreme above other court ladies: “Beauty, in Courts, is so necessary to the young, that those who are without it, seem to be there to no other purpose then to wait upon the triumphs of the fair; to attend their motions in obscurity, as the Moon and Stars do the Sun by day” (23).

Dryden continues by dwelling on the association between beauty and honour, since in the Neoplatonic system beauty is conceived as the outward representation of moral virtue: “But as needful as beauty is, Virtue, and Honour are yet more: the reign of it without their support is unsafe and short like that of Tyrants” (23-24). While praising the duchess’s honourability, the poet points out that natural gifts can benefit society, which is the reason why these qualities are admired: “For Goodness and Humanity, which shine in you, are Virtues which concern Mankind, and by a certain kind of interest all people agree in their commendation, because the profit of them may extend to many” (24). The divinisation of the dedicatee is finally made explicit when the playwright acknowledges that he has already been rewarded by his patroness: “’Tis so much your inclination to do good that you stay not to be ask’d; which is an approach so nigh the Deity, that Humane Nature is not capable of a nearer. ’Tis my Happiness that I can testify this Virtue by my own experience” (24).

Moreover, Dryden connects the panegyric of Anna Scott with the idealisation of the duke of Monmouth, introducing the theme of immortality through a witty comparison between beauty and good wines: “And if Beauty like Wines could be preserv’d, by being mix’d and embodied with others of their own nature, then your Graces would be immortal, since no part of Europe can afford a parallel to your Noble Lord, in masculine Beauty, and in goodness of shape” (24). Dryden explicitly divinises the duke and the duchess, calling them “a pair of Angels sent below to make Virtue amiable in your persons,” and assigning authors the task of “pleasantly” instructing “the Age, by drawing goodness in the most

perfect and alluring shape of Nature” (24). In this manner, he refers to the Neoplatonic association between the responsibilities of courtiers and poets towards society, the former rendering virtue visible through their beauty and the latter making these models widely known and admired.

The second playwright who presented Anna Scott with a dedication was Stapylton. The epistle included in *Hero and Leander* (1669) is particularly brief, although the divinisation of the patroness is concisely achieved through the topos of the ornament: “For if Men had no malice, or such, as could not poyson Books, This should be dedicated to the Divine and Princely Virtues, which make Your Grace an Ornament to the Court, and a Glory to Your Sex” (n.p.). Stapylton thus underlines the exemplariness of the duchess of Monmouth’s beauty and depicts her as a model of femininity. The omission of the duke is all the more surprising given that Stapylton had previously offered her *The Slighted Maid*.

The third dedication addressed to Anna Scott, Settle’s *Cambyses* (1671), is rich in resources of idealisation. The playwright ingeniously introduces the divinisation of the duchess through the topos of the hero, arguing that she has converted the Persian King into a devoted subject. In this manner, he stresses her righteousness and capacity to influence others: “The same Cambyses whom History has represented to be a Blasphemer of the gods, a Prophaner of Religion, and a Defacer of Temples, is by your power become a Convert, and humbly payes his Devotion to that Divinity, to whose protection he commits himself and Fortune” (A2). In addition, Settle describes the duchess as a “Worthy and Illustrious Person” with whom “kind Heaven” has honoured “the World,” and he extols the royal descent of her husband. In so doing, the author attributes to the dedicatee the qualities expected of a woman of her rank, while insisting on the social distance between them and implicitly introducing the request of patronage:

Your Grace . . . who, besides your late Affinity, are Allied to that Royal Race, to which England owes its three last Monarchs; Heaven, I say, besides the Great Souls, High Spirits, and Noble Thoughts it lends such Persons, endues them too with more Familiar Virtues; as Courtesy, Generosity, and a Condescension to entertain the Addresses of Inferiour Mankind, and to smile on the Endeavours of the meanest of their Subjects, and Admirers. (A2-A2v)

Settle also alludes to the complementarity of poets and sovereigns by resorting to the imagery of astronomy hinting at the duchess's connection with royalty: "Else they [admirers] would be forced, like Planets, to move in a Sphear alone; and Greatest Monarchs, should they admit of none below them, would make their Palaces but solitary Prisons" (A2v).

The fourth author who dedicated a play to Anna Scott was Ecclestone. The epistle attached to *Noah's Flood* (1679) abounds in laudatory motifs and makes use of the play's subject matter to launch the divinisation of the patroness: "Now pardon me (Madam) if the Divine Perfections Providence has bestowed upon You, have made me thus boldly aspire to Dedicate this Poem to Your Grace, as being the only Person with whose Nature such Sacred History best accords" (A2). Ecclestone develops this topos pointing to the duchess's physical attractiveness, intelligence and goodness: "Your Grace deserves the Name of Beautiful, and that not only for the Excellent Proportion and Lineaments of Body, as for the Intrinsic Perfections of Your Mind, and Vertues of Your Soul, which are so sweetly joyn'd, that You may justify Challenge, to Your self, the Title of a visible Divinity" (A2). As is customarily the case, the author reiterates her superiority by adopting a fearful attitude and employing the language of religion, while indicating that he is unfit to praise her adequately: "But my greatest fear is, lest while I address my self to Your Grace, like a mistaken Zealot, I should approach the true Deity with a wrong Worship" (A2). In an attempt to further commend the duchess, the playwright denies the possibility of flattery by asserting that failing to recognise her excellence would be deceitful: "I must aver thus much in my own Defence, that Your Perfections are so Divinely rare, You exceed the very Name of Flattery, for what is Adulation in others, is but Your real Character; and to diminish what I have said, would rather prove abusive than a fawning Speech" (A2v).

Given the play's biblical subject matter, the emphasis is placed on the dedicatee's generosity and pious character. By resorting to the Neoplatonic comparison of the dedicatee to the Sun, Ecclestone stresses the duchess's superiority and bounty, in attempt to gain her patronage: "Like the Sun, You rather distribute Your diffusive Beams on all inferior Lights, than take any Rays from them, and that too without diminution to Your self" (A2v). In addition, the author alludes to biblical episodes in order to praise the dedicatee by insisting on her divine nature. He mentions, for instance, the theme of his tragedy, the Deluge, and



the two angels that visited Lot with the intention of extoling her exemplarity and presenting her as having divine powers:

Had Your Grace liv'd in the Old World, You would not only have made an addition to those that were sav'd in the Ark, but even have prevented the Destruction of the Whole: For so pious and sincere, so importunate are all Your Devotions, as what was spoke by the two Angels to Lot, would have been said to You, That they could not be destroy'd so long as You was there. (A2v)<sup>100</sup>

Ecclestone reiterates the imagery of the stars when comparing the duchess to Astrea, the goddess of Justice, and therefore emphasises his dedicatee's virtue: "like Astrea, Your Grace must have been forc'd to have left the Confines of this World, and in a Cloud of Incense flown to Heav'n: Nor need we doubt, but, like her, (being a Star on Earth) You would have made as bright a Constellation there" (A2v).<sup>101</sup> After presenting Anna Scott as a goddess, the author comments on the veneration that she elicits in others: "So sweet and affable is all Your Conversation, so universal is Your Charity and Bounty, and so Charming are Your Smiles that all who know You must admire You, and bless themselves that You are now alive, though in an Age almost as bad as that" (A2v).

The second dedicatee in this group, Isabella FitzRoy, is similarly idealised in de la Roche-Guilhen's dedication of *Rare en tout* (1677). The author extols the beauty of her young patroness by resorting to the different motifs associated with the role of the deferential suitor. For instance, she employs the conventional topos of the eyes of the beloved which make an impression on the hearts of all those who see her: "Je n'ay connu l'éclat de vos jeunes beautez, / Que d'une assez grande distance; / Mais vos yeux ont une puissance, / Qui de près & de loin surprend les libertez" (n.p.).<sup>102</sup> The author continues to praise the duchess's beauty when introducing the idea that the dedicatee's eyes have made a

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<sup>100</sup> Before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, God decided to save Lot because of his goodness and sent two angels to instruct him to leave the city (Gen 19: 1-17).

<sup>101</sup> Astraea, the daughter of Zeus and Themis, was believed to have dwelled among humans in the Golden Age, inspiring them with justice and virtue. After mankind was seized by wickedness, she fled to heaven, where she was transformed into the constellation Virgo (Grimal, "Asteria" 64).

<sup>102</sup> "I have only known the blooming of your youthful beauty from a rather great distance. But your eyes have a power which from a short distance and from afar surprise free will." All quotations from this play have been translated by the author of this dissertation, intending to make the rendering as literal as possible.

mark on her heart, in the same manner as the beloved's make on her suitor: "Mais Madame, quoy que je n'aye veu vostre aymable personne que dans une foule qui ne me laissoit rien de particulier, elle n'a pas fait moins d'impression sur mon coeur" (n.p.).<sup>103</sup> De la Roche-Guilhen depicts her patroness as possessing some of the conventional female qualities (beauty, sweetness, innocence), arguing that it is inevitable to love her; even Cupid himself does:

Ouy l'on découvre en vous tout ce qui peut charmer,  
La beauté, la douceur, l'esprit, la connoissance,  
Et vous n'avez rien de l'enfance,  
Que cet air innocent s'y propre à faire aymer.  
On dépeint l'amour de vostre âge,  
Il touche les coeurs comme vous;  
Mais en voyant votre visage,  
S'il ne l'adoroit pas il en seroit jaloux. (n.p.)<sup>104</sup>

Other than lavishing praise on Isabella's countenance, de la Roche-Guilhen seizes the opportunity to remind readers that she had been pre-contracted in marriage to a natural son of King Charles and compliments her father and family, exalting the education that she had been provided with: "Le choix équitable qu'un des plus Grands Roys de l'Europe a fait en voter faveur pour un Prince qui a l'honneur d'estre de son sang, les dignitez que le mérite de Monseigneur vostre Père remplit si avantageusement l'éducation admirable que vous recevez dans vostre famille, et une infinite d'autres" (n.p.).<sup>105</sup> Even though these references are brief, the fact that Isabella was to marry Henry FitzRoy constituted a great honour for herself and her father and contributed to assert the honourability of the family.

In addition to advancing the value of their plays and their own as authors through the panegyric of their patronesses, dedicators often comment on the interest that the

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<sup>103</sup> "But Madam, although I have only seen your lovely person but in a crowd which has left me unaffected, she has not made less an impression upon my heart."

<sup>104</sup> "Yes, one finds in you everything that can charm, beauty, sweetness, wit, knowledge. And you have nothing from girlhood, but that innocent look so suited for being loved. Love is depicted at your age. He touches hearts like you do, but beholding your face, if he did not adore it, he would be jealous."

<sup>105</sup> "The worthy choice that one of the greatest kings in Europe has done in your favour for a Prince who has the honour of being of his blood, the dignities that the merit of His Grace, your father, fulfils so honourably, the admirable education that you receive in your family, and an infinite number of other things."

dedicatees have shown in their works. It appears that the only playwrights in this section who had received such honour were Settle and de la Roche-Guilhen. In the dedication to *Cambyzes* (1671), Settle justifies choosing Anna Scott as his dedicatee by recognising that she read the work before it was staged: “The Entertainment you gave it in loose sheets, when it first saw light, encourages me to this presumption, now in its riper growth, to devote it wholly to your Self, and under that Title to stile it happy” (A3). Moreover, he explains the offering to the duchess by establishing a connection between the nobility of his patroness and the heroes of the tragedy: “Since the great Characters, and Subjects of serious Plays, are representations of the past Glories of the World, the arrogance of an Epistle Dedicatory may pretend to some Justice, in offering the Heroick Stories of past Ages to their Hands, who are the Ornaments of the present” (A2-A2v).

De la Roche-Guilhen begins the dedication of *Rare en tout* (1677) by mentioning that her work was composed as a court entertainment for the king, which serves her to introduce the panegyric of Isabella FitzRoy and to request her protection:

L'inclination respectueuse que j'ay pour vostre Grandeur, m'a inspiré le dessein de mettre son nom à la teste de cet ouvrage, comm'il est destiné à divertir sa Majesté & toute son Illustre Cour, & que vous vous faites distinguer d'une manière surprenante dans un âge où l'on est ordinairement inconnu au monde; Je ne doute point qu'il me soit favorablement recru si vous l'honorez de vostre protection. (n.p.)<sup>106</sup>

Another strategy which could serve to justify the choice of addressee was to mention the preference of the court for a dramatic genre. For instance, in the dedication of *The Indian Emperour* (1667) Dryden argues that the acceptance of heroic tragedies in the commercial playhouse had been possible thanks to the approval of members of the court, who had applauded the use of verse in drama:

The favour which Heroick Plays have lately found upon our Theaters has been wholly deriv'd to them, from the countenance and approbation they have receiv'd at Court, the most eminent persons for Wit and Honour in the

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<sup>106</sup> “The respectful devotion that I have for your Greatness has inspired in me the intention to put its [i.e. your] name at the head of this work, since it is intended to entertain his Majesty and all his Illustrious Court, and since you distinguish yourself in a manner surprising, for an age when one is ordinarily unknown to the world; I do not doubt that it will be favourably received if you honour it with your protection.”

Royal Circle having so far own'd them, that they have judg'd no way so fit as Verse to entertain a Noble Audience, or to express a noble passion. (23)

Most of the authors who offered plays to Anna Scott and Isabella FitzRoy adopt a modest attitude and employ different tropes decrying their own talent with the intention of further praising their addressees and apologising for requesting their patronage. Dramatists tend to indulge in verbosity, for the use of various topoi serves to insist on the humbleness of the dedicator and the superiority of the dedicatee. The more significant examples are found in Settle, Ecclestone and de la Roche-Guilhen's epistles. In the dedication of *Cambyses* (1667) to Anna Scott, Settle introduces his bid for patronage by combining the topos of the sanctuary and the language of astronomy. In an attempt to emphasise the greatness of the duchess and propitiate her, he explains that, since she had read the tragedy before its staging, it was produced under the most favourable conditions:

The assurance therefore of these Virtues, which particularly possess so large a seat in your Heroick Breast, animate me to present this Poem to your Hands, that it may take Sanctuary there, where in its Infancy it received protection. As he that's born under some happy Planet, owes the success of his whole Life to the Predominance of that kinder Star that ruled at his Nativity. (A3)

Despite the humility shown in their addresses, playwrights display a certain confidence in the protection of their patroness. Settle claims her name will deter critics: "thus Guarded, I dare expose it to the World; and stand in less awe of Censures, when your Influence protects it, For, as that timerous Pilot, in a Storm, was Condemn'd for fearing Shipwrack when his Vessel carried Caesar; this Poem can fear no dangers when it carries your Name for its Defence" (A3-A3v). As befits a professional playwright, Settle addresses the duchess in a submissive manner to extol her, but he also reminds his readers that he has formerly obtained her patronage in an effort to maximise his symbolic capital.

De la Roche-Guilhen similarly demonstrates humbleness in the dedication of *Rare en tout* (1677) to Isabella FitzRoy, but she does so by continuing to employ the discourse of the deferential suitor. The author expands on her duty towards Isabella while belittling her piece, wishing that her affection for the dedicatee could compensate for its imperfections: "Faites moy la grâce d'estre persuadée que si les sentiments tenoient lieu de quelque chose

ceux que vous m'avez inspirez, repareroient tous les deffauts du présent que je prends la liberté de vous faire, puis que je suis avec tout le respect et la passion possible" (n.p.).<sup>107</sup> De la Roche insisted on her respect and admiration for Lady Grafton, not only to please her father the lord chamberlain out of sincere gratitude, but most probably because, being a foreigner and a professional female writer, she felt that her capital was at a low ebb and that she need to ingratiate herself with the English court, her new potential readers.<sup>108</sup>

Contrary to the previous dedicators, Stapylton's request for patronage in the dedication of *Hero and Leander* (1669) to Anna Scott is simple and laconic: "If your Grace be pleased to accept my Duty, and pardon the Errors of my Poem, no Author can be Happier then Your Grace's Most obedient Servant R. Stapylton" (n.p.). He does exhibit humility by stressing his obligation towards the duchess and asking her forbearance for the inadequacy of the play. His directness seems to reveal that either he had already secured the duchess's protection or that he felt it was not indispensable to his career, even though *Hero and Leander* had not been staged. The reason for this is that Stapylton enjoyed favourable economic circumstances in comparison to fellow dramatists: his position as a gentleman-usher to the king enabled him to present himself as an amateur playwright and he dedicated the tragedy because this was a practice expected by his readers.<sup>109</sup>

In the dedication of *Noah's Flood* (1679), Ecclestone also manifests modesty in order to further idealise Anna Scott. He refers to the play as his "First born fancy" which he is "laying" on her "Altar" (A2v) and argues that her name, which he metaphorises into an angel guarding the ark, will protect him from criticism:

But so long as Your Seraphick Form guards the door of the Ark, I need not  
fear what the malice of a Hell of Criticks can do against it: but rather am

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<sup>107</sup> "Please be reassured that if feelings could be replaced by something, those that you have inspired me would repair all the defaults of the present that I am taking the liberty to offer you."

<sup>108</sup> Less than two months after the publication of *Rare en tout*, one of de la Roche-Guilhen's romances was translated into English as *Asteria and Tamberlain*, being advertised in the Term Catalogue for 5 July 1677 (Arber 1: 281). This was followed by *Almanzor; and Almanzaida*, which appears listed in the Term Catalogue for 22 June 1678 (Arber 1: 320). In neither of these works is there a reference to de la Roche's authorship.

<sup>109</sup> Stapylton would die shortly afterwards in July 1669 as a parishioner of St Martin-in-the-Fields and would be buried near the vestry door of Westminster Abbey. His wealth at his death was estimated to be £2000 out as a mortgage, £1400 in bonds and £105 in legacies; it also included jewellery, furniture and goods (L. G. Kelly).

assur'd by Your Patronage, to view it safely sayling through all their Storms to the happy Mount, where when they are all securely Landed, I shall not think them more happy than I am in subscribing my self, Madam, Your Graces Most Humble, Most Obedient, and Most Devoted Servant. (A3)

Since he had failed to have his play staged and was unknown to buyers of drama, Ecclestone adopts a humble stance to highlight the renown of the duchess, for the dedication (which is announced on the title-page) is the main component which could augment the symbolic capital of his play.

Dryden, on the contrary, can take pride on the favourable reception that *The Indian Emperour* had during its second première in his dedication to Anna Scott. Since its first run in April 1665 had been disrupted by the plague, the dramatist needs to compensate for it by demonstrating that the audience, particularly the court, had given its approval in the revival of January 1667:

Amongst the rest which have been written in this kind [heroic drama], they [the members of the court] have been so indulgent to this Poem, as to allow it no inconsiderable place. Since, therefore, to the Court I owe its fortune on the Stage, so, being now more publicly expos'd in Print, I humbly recommend it to your Graces Protection. (23)

Dryden addresses the duchess with due humility to acknowledge her social superiority and also resorts to the topos of the hero in order to request her patronage, once again extolling her beauty: “Under your Patronage Montezuma hopes he is more safe than in his Native Indies: and therefore comes to throw himself at your Graces feet; paying that homage to your Beauty, which he refus'd to the violence of his Conquerours” (25). Moreover, the author customarily belittles his work by owning his impudence in offering it to her: “In this address I have already quitted the character of a modest Man, by presenting you this Poem as an acknowledgment, which stands in need of your protection; and which ought no more to be esteem'd a Present, then it is accounted bounty in the Poor, when they bestow a Child on some wealthy Friend, who can give it better Education” (25). However, the playwright seizes the chance to remind readers of his sustained career when courting his patroness's protection by combining the tropes of the poor poet and the offspring: “Offsprings of this Nature are like to be so numerous with me, that I must be forc'd to send some of them abroad; only this is like to be more fortunate then his Brothers, because I have landed him

on a Hospitable shore” (25). In this manner, Dryden implicitly notes that he has secured a position in the field and that he intends to continue to exploit it. Being now on the verge of reaching the peak of his career, the dramatist had accumulated sufficient symbolic capital to present himself to his readers as being satisfied with his tragedy:

His [Montezuma’s] story is, perhaps the greatest, which was ever represented in a Poem of this nature; (the action of it including the Discovery and Conquest of a New World.) In it I have neither wholly follow’d the truth of the History, nor altogether left it: but have taken all the liberty of a Poet, to adde, alter, or diminish, as I thought might best conduce to the beautifying of my work. (25)

Dryden’s position provides him with the necessary confidence to admit that he has freely adapted historical sources to fulfil his literary purposes and please the taste of his audience.

#### **4.2 Dedications addressed to the royal family after the Glorious Revolution**

King Charles was succeeded by his brother, James II, in February 1685. On 10 June 1688 the birth of a healthy son to James and his Roman Catholic wife, Mary of Modena, dashed hopes that the crown would eventually pass to his eldest daughter Mary. The daunting prospect of a Roman Catholic dynasty led seven peers to write to Mary’s husband, William of Orange, on 30 June 1688, pledging to support him if he brought a force into England to overthrow James. William landed unopposed on 5 November and James, perceiving no chance of success, fled to France on 23 December. On 22 January the convention parliament declared that James had abdicated by deserting his kingdom and William and Mary were offered the throne as joint monarchs (Speck, “Mary”; Claydon, “William”). The new sovereigns attempted to legitimise the Revolution emphasising the need for a moral reformation. They presented themselves as the instruments chosen by God to regenerate the nation, ending the debauchery of the reigns of Charles II and James II.<sup>110</sup>

Both Queen Mary and her sister Anne, first as royal princess and later as ruling monarch, were offered dedications in this period. The fact that both ladies received only a dedication each when occupying the throne should not be surprising, for dedicatory epistles

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<sup>110</sup> On this providential emphasis, see for instance Claydon, *William*.

addressed to monarchs were not abundant.<sup>111</sup> Regarding the authors, they can all be classified as professional playwrights, except for the actress Anne Shadwell, who dedicated a posthumous play by her husband. Table 3 provides the basic information on these dedicatory epistles.

Table 3: Dedications addressed to members of the royal family after the Glorious Revolution

Dedicator, play	Dedicatee
Shadwell, A., <i>The Volunteers</i> (1693)	Mary, Queen of England, Scotland and Ireland
Banks, <i>Cyrus the Great</i> (1696)	Anne Stuart, Princess Royal and later Queen of Great Britain and Ireland
Congreve, <i>The Mourning Bride</i> (1697)	
Trotter, <i>Fatal Friendship</i> (1698)	
Hill, <i>Rinaldo</i> (1711)	

### Dedicatees and dedicators

Despite having accessed the throne in April 1689, Queen Mary only received a dedication about a year and a half before the end of her reign (December 1694). Probably the offering was prompted by the fact that the queen had been taking a more active role in the administration of the realm since 1691, due to William’s frequent absences (generally from spring until autumn) as part of his campaigns against Louis XIV.<sup>112</sup> The author of the epistle was Anne Shadwell (fl. 1661-1705), the widow of dramatist Thomas Shadwell. Anne was born into a prosperous middle-class family, for her father, Thomas Gibbs of Norfolk, worked as a proctor and public notary (Highfill et al. 13: 275). She began an acting career at

<sup>111</sup> Charles II and James II were also dedicated dramatic texts during their reigns, although very few. King Charles was offered a semi-opera *Ariadne* (1674), which had been originally composed by Pierre Perrin and later expanded by Louis Grabu, although the epistle was collectively signed by the Royal Academy of Music (see Spink). James was addressed the second edition of Dryden and Grabu’s *Albion and Albanus* (1687), the epistle being subscribed by the latter who also financed the edition. This work had been first published shortly after Charles passed away in 1685, for Grabu added a postscript to the preface lamenting the event and its harmful consequences to the development of opera.

<sup>112</sup> William personally commanded British forces in Flanders in order to protect the Netherlands against France until 1697, when the Nine Years’ War ended in a peace of exhaustion. According to Claydon, William had launched the 1688 invasion in order to add British resources to his conflict with the French king (“William”).



some point before July 1661, when she played in Oxford with the Red Bull Troupe, before joining the Duke's Company the following season (Van Lennep 16, 36-37). Anne married Thomas Shadwell sometime between 23 February 1663 and 22 January 1664 (Bennet, "Shadwell"). Her husband issued from a minor long-established gentry family of Norfolk, who had become impoverished in the Civil War. After matriculating at Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, which he left without taking a degree, and studying at the Middle Temple, Shadwell turned to playwriting with *The Sullen Lovers* in 1668.<sup>113</sup> He soon became one of the preferred playwrights of the Duke's Company, authoring a play per year almost uninterruptedly until 1682.

The controversy provoked by *The Lancashire Witches* (staged December 1681, printed 1682), which was partially censored by the master of the revels, led to a six-year halt in his dramatic career.<sup>114</sup> A change in fortune took place with the political crisis that unfolded at the end of James II's reign. Shadwell's *The Squire of Alsatia* (staged May 1688) was an extraordinary success, running for thirteen consecutive performances and yielding the author 130*l.* for the benefit night (J. Downes 86). With the accession of William and Mary in 1689, Shadwell, the leading Whig writer, superseded Dryden as poet laureate and historiographer royal. Shadwell would write four other plays before his death from an overdose of opium (which he used to alleviate his gout) in November 1692: *Bury-Fair* (1689), *The Amorous Bigotte* (1690), *The Scowrers* (1691) and *The Volunteers* (1693). The last play was staged shortly after his death at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, with reasonable success (Van Lennep 415). It appeared in print the following year, being advertised in the Term Catalogue for June 1693 (Arber 2: 465), with a dedication to Queen Mary signed by the dramatist's widow.

As regards the other dedicatee, Anne Stuart was offered plays only after her sister died of smallpox in December 1694, when her position as heir to the throne was

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<sup>113</sup> Anne played the part of Emilia in this comedy and she also acted in other plays by her husband. The actress appears in the roster of the Duke's Company until the season 1680-1681 (Van Lennep 290); she may have acted with the United Company in 1686-1687 and even with Christopher Rich's company in 1699 (Bennett, "Shadwell").

<sup>114</sup> Shadwell attempted to deflect criticism in his preface attributing it to a Catholic party that took offence at his portrayal of an Irish priest. Yet his comedy also attacked High-Church Anglicans in the person of the knavish chaplain Smerk.

strengthened.<sup>115</sup> The lack of dedicatory epistles inscribed to the royal princess in the previous years can be explained on account of her retirement from court in 1692.<sup>116</sup> At the death of Queen Mary, a public reconciliation was effected between Anne and William, for, given her superior claim to the throne, the king could not risk being alienated from the heir apparent (Gregg, “Anne”).<sup>117</sup> However, this rapprochement was superficial: the princess did not play any significant role in government throughout William’s reign, and neither did her husband, Prince George.<sup>118</sup> Nevertheless, both William and Anne cooperated in securing the rights of the duke of Gloucester, Anne’s son, as second in line to the throne, against the Jacobite claimant, James Francis Edward Stuart, James II’s son by Mary of Modena (Van der Kiste 183). The formation of a household for Gloucester in 1698 provided the princess with an opportunity to favour her friend Sarah Churchill’s candidates, including her husband Lord Marlborough as the duke’s governor.

Three dramatists presented plays to Princess Anne during William’s reign: Banks, Congreve and Trotter. John Banks, who had already offered Anne *The Unhappy Favourite*, dedicated to her *Cyrus the Great* (1696), an adaptation of the widely read aristocratic romance by Mme. de Scudéry, *Le Grand Cyrus* (1649-1653). Despite having been composed in 1680, the tragedy was apparently rejected by the actors (*Comparison* 24).<sup>119</sup> Only after the dissolution of the United Company precipitated intense rivalry between

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<sup>115</sup> Before being given the throne, William had to acknowledge Anne’s and her children’s right to succeed before any of the children he might have by a second wife (Claydon, “William”).

<sup>116</sup> Following the discovery of the correspondence of Lord Marlborough (Anne’s chief adviser) with the Jacobite court and his dismissal from his offices and from court on 20 January 1692, Mary commanded Anne to discharge Lady Marlborough (the princess’s groom of the stole and lifelong friend) from her service. Anne refused to obey and, when the Marlboroughs were ordered to leave the Cockpit (Anne’s Whitehall residence), she announced her withdrawal from court until the order was cancelled (Gregg, “Anne”).

<sup>117</sup> Soon after Anne’s visit to William on 13 January 1695, the king presented her with most of Mary’s jewels and announced that St James’s Palace would be bestowed on her (Gregg, “Anne”).

<sup>118</sup> Anne had married George, Prince of Denmark, on 28 July 1683. The union had been actively promoted by the duke of York, in an attempt to counteract William’s influence in British politics by bringing another Protestant prince into the royal family, and by Louis XIV, for both France and Denmark were opposed to the Dutch (Gregg, “Anne”).

<sup>119</sup> In fact, following the failures of *Cyrus the Great* and *The Island Queens*, which was banned from the stage in 1684, Banks turned aside from playwriting for a while and resumed his legal career (Brayne). Hume describes *Cyrus the Great* as “the worst of the late heroic love-and-drive mode” (*Development* 422).

Rich's and Betterton's companies, the need for new plays brought *Cyrus the Great* unto the stage. It was performed in mid-December 1695 by Betterton's Company and, according to Charles Gildon, its run lasted "about Six Days together" (6); the printed edition was listed in the Term Catalogue for June 1696 (Arber 2: 590). In the dedication, however, Banks provided a different view of the circumstances surrounding the original failure of his work and its eventual production some fifteen years later. As Derek Hughes notes, the playwright avoided humiliation claiming that the piece had been banned (*English Drama* 428). He also built on the symbolic capital accumulated through his *Unhappy Favourite* to enhance the value of his gift and lost no opportunity to thank Princess Anne for recommending the play, intimating that his patroness had interceded on his behalf:<sup>120</sup>

A banish'd Play that tedious Years had mourn'd,  
 Blest with your favour, by your Smiles return'd,  
 Writ and design'd for this Immortal Grace,  
 E're my then happier Favourite took place.

.....  
 Since this had never liv'd but for your sake,  
 'Tis just I give you what your self did make:  
 For the Great Cyrus being but a Child,  
 And in his Cradle destin'd to be kill'd  
 Your Highness his Divine Panthea<sup>121</sup> now,  
 Has rais'd him both to Empire and to You. (A3)

As for William Congreve's (1670-1729) social background, the poet and playwright was born in Bardsey Grange, Yorkshire, into a well-connected gentry family. In 1673 his father (also William Congreve) obtained a passport to the Low Countries to purchase coach horses for the duke of York (Ferdinand and McKenzie). The following year Congreve senior was posted to Youghal, in County Cork, Ireland, as lieutenant under Richard Boyle, earl of Cork and Burlington. Aged twelve at the time, young Congreve may have been sent to Kilkelly College, one of Ireland's most distinguished educational establishments. In April 1686 he entered Trinity College, Dublin, where he shared a tutor, the philosopher George Ashe, with his longstanding friend Jonathan Swift. Nevertheless, Congreve's time at Trinity

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<sup>120</sup> The fact that the printed quarto includes a prologue addressing Anne suggests that the princess attended or commissioned a performance.

<sup>121</sup> The heroine of the play, made prisoner in war and separated from her betrothed Abradatas.

College was cut short by the exodus of Protestants from Ireland in the last year of James II's reign.<sup>122</sup> In March 1689 the family moved to Stretton Hall, their home in Staffordshire, where Congreve wrote a novel, *Incognita*, and a draft of his first play, *The Old Batchelor*.<sup>123</sup> On 21 March 1691 he was admitted to the Middle Temple, although he was more interested in pursuing his literary interests than being called to the bar.

Congreve soon began to move in literary circles, contributing poems to a miscellany edited by his friend Charles Gildon in 1692 and making the acquaintance of the dramatists John Dryden and Thomas Southerne, to whom he showed the manuscript of *The Old Batchelor* (Ferdinand and McKenzie).<sup>124</sup> This comedy was a phenomenal success, having an unprecedented run of fourteen nights in early March 1693 and running through three editions by the end of the month (Van Lennep 418-19). Despite such an exceptional debut play, his second, *The Double-Dealer*, possibly premiered in October or November that year, was received indifferently (Van Lennep 428).<sup>125</sup> The following, *Love for Love*, almost repeated the tremendous success of his first: the comedy was chosen by Betterton's Company to open the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre on 30 April 1695 and ran for thirteen nights (Van Lennep 445).<sup>126</sup> Not only did this work earn Congreve a substantial sum of money, but also a full share in the new house, in return for agreeing to write a new play for

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<sup>122</sup> Nonetheless, Trinity College awarded Congreve an MA degree in 1696 (Ferdinand and McKenzie).

<sup>123</sup> *Incognita* was published under the pseudonym "Cleophil" in 1692 with a dedication to Katharine Levenson, whereas the comedy was printed in 1693, displaying Congreve's name on the title-page and including a dedicatory epistle to Charles Boyle, Lord Clifford of Lanesborough, grandson of Richard Boyle and future earl of Burlington.

<sup>124</sup> Congreve participated in Dryden's edition of the satires of Juvenal and Persius (published in 1693), contributing a translation of Juvenal's eleventh satire, as well as a complimentary poem to the former laureate (Ferdinand and McKenzie).

<sup>125</sup> The play was acted at least eight nights, a respectable initial run, and became part of the repertoire. In fact, Queen Mary commanded a performance in January 1694 (Van Lennep 431). The printed edition appeared in 1694 with a dedication to Charles Montagu, lord Commissioner of the Treasury.

<sup>126</sup> Internal dissensions in the United Company, which resulted early in 1695 in the secession of a group of actors led by Betterton, delayed the production of *Love for Love*. The text had been accepted for staging at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane in the Fall of 1694, but Congreve postponed the signing of the contract until Betterton's new company, which had the actors for whom he had originally written the parts, was established (Cibber 114-115). The printed text, issued in 1695, was dedicated to the lord chamberlain, the earl of Dorset, who had helped Betterton secure the patent for his company.

them every year (Cibber 115). After producing three comedies, Congreve turned to tragedy with great applause in *The Mourning Bride*. Possibly premiered on 20 February 1697, this play was another triumph with a thirteen-night run (Van Lennep 474). Moreover, the printed version, which was dedicated to Princess Anne, was so popular that it went through two editions in 1697 and was pirated twice that same year (Ferdinand and McKenzie).

The third playwright to address Princess Anne in this period was Catharine Trotter (c. 1674-1749). She was born into a well-positioned Scottish family, the second daughter of David Trotter, a naval captain, and Sarah Bellenden, who was related to the families of Lord Bellenden and the earls of Perth and Lauderdale (Kelley, "Trotter"). The family moved from a position of relative affluence to one of genteel poverty when Catherine's father died of the plague on a voyage in 1683.<sup>127</sup> As for her education, Catharine acquired a knowledge of French, Latin and logic, either by her own efforts or with minimal assistance. She soon grew an interest in literature and made her literary debut with an epistolary novella, *The Adventures of a Young Lady*, which appeared anonymously in Samuel Briscoe's *Letters of Love and Gallantry* (1693-1694). After this publication Trotter turned to drama, authoring a total of wrote five plays, which were all performed on the London stage. The first, *Agnes de Castro*, was produced by Rich's Company in December 1695 (Van Lennep 455); the text, which was advertised in the Term Catalogue for February 1696 (Arber 2: 570), was printed without her name, but it included a dedication to the earl of Dorset boasting of his approval and encouragement This tragedy was followed by *Fatal Friendship*, which was acted by Betterton's Company in late May or early June 1698 (Van Lennep 494). The work appears to have been well received by her contemporaries, the printed edition, which was dedicated to Princess Anne, including four commendatory poems.

Anne succeeded to the throne on 8 March 1702, following the death of William III in a hunting accident. The transition between the two monarchs was smooth, for the queen was advised to continue William's domestic and international strategies, which consisted in maintaining the Hanoverian succession and counteracting the ascendancy of France (Gregg,

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<sup>127</sup> Her mother was granted a pension by Charles II in 1684, which ceased at the king's death the following year. The pension was only restored when Queen Anne accessed to the throne in 1702, possibly through the mediation of Bishop Burnet, who befriended Trotter. Nevertheless, this pension of a mere £20 per year did not provide Catharine with enough financial stability (Birch iv).

“Anne”).<sup>128</sup> Within months, the War of Spanish Succession, which was to last for her entire reign, erupted on the continent. Nevertheless, the queen was able to retain her popularity by supplementing governmental revenues with £100,000 of her civil list for the duration of the conflict. Following the resounding English victory over Louis XIV’s armies at Blenheim in August 1704 under Marlborough’s command, Anne strengthened her hand in negotiating the union of the English and Scottish parliaments, which finally took place on 1 May 1707.<sup>129</sup> Politically, Anne’s rule was marked by the contest for power between Whigs and Tories. Even though the monarch attempted to govern through mixed ministries, the Whigs became dominant in 1708, which was followed by a major shift to the Tories in 1710 until the end of her reign.

The last dedication inscribed to Queen Anne was offered by Aaron Hill (1685-1750) in 1711. Hill was born into an upper middle-class London family. His father, George Hill, was a successful attorney who owned an estate in Malmesbury, Wiltshire, although financial difficulties forced him to sell in 1707 (Gerrard, “Hill”). With the support of his maternal grandmother, Ann Gregory, Hill was sent to the grammar school at Barnstaple, Devon, and then to Westminster School (c. 1696-1699). Between 1700 and 1704, he completed his education with a journey to the Near East to visit a distant relative, Lord Paget, English ambassador to Constantinople. On his return in April 1703, Hill tutored William Wentworth of Bretton Hall, Yorkshire, before acting as secretary to the earl of Peterborough from 1707 until 1710. After marrying the daughter of a prosperous grocer from Stratford in 1710, Hill made use of his wife’s dowry to embark on a career as a theatrical manager and

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<sup>128</sup> After the premature death of the duke of Gloucester (Anne’s only surviving child) in July 1700, Parliament passed the Act of Settlement in June 1701. This act stated that, in case both William and Anne should die without progeny, the throne would pass to the Protestant Electress Sophia of Hanover (Charles I’s niece) and her Protestant heirs (Claydon, “William”). However, Queen Anne managed to keep the heir apparent out of England, so as to prevent the establishment of a rival court.

<sup>129</sup> This was the solution adopted following the continuing disagreement over the succession, which reached a peak in the spring of 1703, when the Scottish parliament passed a Bill of Security stipulating that the next Scottish monarch should be a Protestant, though not the person who inherited the English crown. This was widely interpreted as an encouragement to the Jacobite pretender to convert and a provocation to Anne and the English government (Gregg, “Anne”).

impresario.<sup>130</sup> The first opportunity came in November 1709, when William Collier, a Tory MP with entrepreneurial inclinations, acquired a licence to perform plays, hired actors and signed a lease on the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, making Hill stage manager (Milhous and Hume, “Haymarket” 524). Hill was thus able to produce his tragedy *Elfrid*, premiered on 3 January 1710, which met with indifference (Avery 207). The theatre manager barely survived the season, since early in June the actors rioted against him and, as a result, the lord chamberlain silenced the house.

Later that year, Collier obtained a licence for opera and rented the Queen’s Theatre in the Haymarket, again delegating management of his enterprise to Hill for a flat fee of £600 per year (Cibber 252).<sup>131</sup> With a small but impressive roster of Italian singers (headed by the celebrated castrato Nicolo Grimaldi), the company performed twice a week drawing in reasonable audiences, although receipts could barely cover salaries and expenses (Milhous and Hume, “Haymarket” 524-526). Confronted with the need for a box-office success to make the company financially viable, Hill created an all-sung Italian opera with Handel, who was by then widely recognised as the rising star composer.<sup>132</sup> *Rinaldo*, Handel’s first London opera, was premiered on 24 February 1711 (Avery 243). Being specifically written for the London stage, *Rinaldo* included spectacular effects derived from the semi-operatic tradition, which were appealing to English taste, hoping to give Italian

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<sup>130</sup> Hill undertook innumerable commercial ventures, including extracting oil from beechnuts, manufacturing chinaware, colonising agricultural land in southern Carolina, harvesting Scottish pine trees for use by the British navy and establishing vineyards in Plaistow. None of these, however, generated large profits for Hill and the other investors (Gerrard, “Hill”).

<sup>131</sup> The Queen’s Theatre in the Haymarket was built at the initiative of playwright and architect John Vanbrugh, who raised the capital required by subscriptions from fellow members of the Whiggish Kit-Kat Club (K. Downes). Designed as an opera house, it opened on 9 April 1705 with the premiere of Giacomo Greber’s *The Loves of Ergasto*. After the two acting companies were united at Drury Lane under Rich’s management in January 1708, Vanbrugh gained an opera monopoly at the Haymarket, although the arrangement soon proved disastrous. Vanbrugh went broke after four months and the opera company was transferred to his assistant, Owen Swiney, who later sublet the theatre to Collier (Milhous and Hume, “Haymarket” 523-524).

<sup>132</sup> The circumstances of this collaboration are unknown, although it might have been brought about by hazard. According to the eighteenth-century music historian Charles Burney, Handel’s visit to London was brought about by “an invitation from several English noblemen, with whom he had made acquaintance at the court of Hanover” (222). According to John Mainwaring, Handel’s eighteenth-century biographer, it was Charles Montague, ambassador to Venice, who insisted on Handel traveling to London (72). Another possibility suggested by Milhous and Hume is that Handel was invited by Owen Swiney, Hill’s predecessor at the Haymarket, who had been hiring performers from the continent since May 1708 (“Haymarket” 525).

opera in London a new direction.<sup>133</sup> The libretto was printed about ten days before the opening performance and displayed both Giacomo Rossi's Italian text and Hill's translation on facing pages (Gerrard, *Aaron Hill* 32).<sup>134</sup> Hill dedicated the work to Queen Anne, expressing his gratitude for her support of opera and beseeching the monarch to contribute to the consolidation of these entertainments in London:

This Opera is a Native of your Majesty's Dominions and was consequently born your Subject: 'Tis thence that it presumes to come, a dutiful Entreater of your Royal Favour and Protection; a Blessing, which having once obtain'd, it cannot miss the Clemency of every Air it may hereafter breathe in. Nor shall I then be longer doubtful of succeeding in my Endeavour, to see the English Opera more splendid than her Mother, the Italian. (n.p.)<sup>135</sup>

*Rinaldo* was an immediate success, with fifteen performances in 1711, the last four given at the desire of "several Ladies of Quality" and "several persons of quality" (see Avery 243-249, 251; Milhous and Hume, *London Stage* 636-637, 642-643).<sup>136</sup> Nevertheless, Hill could not profit much from the widely applauded opera that he had launched, since, after the third performance on 3 March, Collier deposed Hill as manager and forcibly took possession of the theatre. Hill soon discovered that the management owed

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<sup>133</sup> "Semi-operas" combined spoken dialogue with interpolated musical entertainments that rarely required any singing from principals. The main ingredient of these works was the highly elaborate spectacle, scenery, and costumes. The emergence of Italian opera in England at the turn of the century was due to the general vogue for all-sung opera on the Continent. British entrepreneurs recognised the popularity of Italian-style opera and were keen to import it to London (Hume, "The Sponsorship of Opera" 422).

<sup>134</sup> It seems probable that Hill wrote the English text before asking Rossi's collaboration for the Italian translation. As Hill explains in his Preface, he was the one to choose the subject of *Rinaldo*, adapting it from Tasso's *La Gerusalemme liberata*. Christine Gerrard has argued in favour of this hypothesis that "Hill almost certainly understated his contribution and overstated Rossi's in order to give the obscure Italian helpful publicity" (*Aaron Hill*, 33). Moreover, the English text has been described as being of better quality than the Italian: "It is certainly superior, as a poem, to the version of any Italian opera which the English had yet seen, though extremely rough for an Italian lyric poem, in the original" (Burney 222nf).

<sup>135</sup> It appears that *Rinaldo* stimulated Queen Anne's interest in opera: shortly after the premiere, on the occasion of her birthday (6 February), a private performance of arias and keyboard music, in which Handel participated, was held at St James's Palace (Burrows). Another opera recital was given for her birthday in 1712 and the next year Handel composed an ode for this celebration (see Bucholz, *Augustan Court* 218). Handel benefited directly from the queen's patronage, being rewarded with an annual pension of £200, which was granted to him on 28 December 1713 (Burrows).

<sup>136</sup> Ten more performances of *Rinaldo* were given before the end of Queen Anne's reign: from January until April 1712 and again in May 1713 (see Avery 268-272, 301-302).



tradesmen enough money for them to lodge a formal protest with the lord chamberlain and they held him liable for the payment of these bills (Milhous and Hume, “Haymarket” 526). After Collier, who seems to have taken advantage of Hill’s financial naiveté, failed to pay him the subscription surplus to settle the unpaid bills, Hill withdrew from the theatre management, although he continued to write for the stage.

## Dedications

Some major differences are revealed when comparing the panegyrics of Mary and Anne Stuart in the dedications written after the Revolution with the ones they received during Charles II’s reign. It appears that authors tone down the commendation of their patronesses after they access the throne. For instance, when presenting *The Volunteers* (1693) to Queen Mary, Anne Shadwell succinctly refers to her “Virtues, and other Endowments, both of Mind and Body” (157). Likewise, in the epistle prefaced to *Rinaldo* (1711), Aaron Hill simply describes Anne as “the Best of Queens” (n.p.). In a move that seems consistent with the moral bent of the new regime, neither Mary nor Anne was praised for her beauty in these texts, despite both having been previously extolled for their physical appearance.<sup>137</sup> Nevertheless, the divinisation of the dedicatee continues to be a common feature of these dedicatory epistles. For example, in *The Volunteers* (1693), Anne Shadwell idealises Queen Mary on the basis of the high esteem which her subjects accord to her, thus adding a national dimension to her panegyric: “[these qualities] which in a private Person would have procur’d you the Admiration of Mankind, and cannot in a Queen but be consider’d as *the highest National Blessing* we enjoy from Heaven” (157, my emphasis)

Similarly, in the dedication of *Cyrus the Great* (1696), Banks divinises Princess Anne on account of the admiration she allegedly inspires in the British people, a theme which he develops in the poem included in the epistle. After implying that Anne has captivated all hearts through a conventional reference to Cupid, Banks resorts to the topos of the hero and describes Cyrus as dedicating his military triumphs to the princess, while he offers her the acclaim won with his tragedy:

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<sup>137</sup> See the discussion of Crowne’s and Cooke’s dedications to Mary, as well as Banks’s epistle to Anne in the previous section (pp. 87-97).

The God of Love, who in the Scene departs,  
Bequeaths to You his Quiver and his Darts,  
And, what is more, his Title to all Hearts.  
Whilst at your Feet, the mighty Monarch lays  
His conquer'd Crowns, as humbly I the Bays. (A3)

Furthermore, Banks continues the theme of the hero to express his gratitude to the dedicatee for attending one of the performances and celebrates her as a source of rejoicing and consolation to the people for the recent loss of Queen Mary:

Happy was He that Presence to ingage,  
That cheer'd the World, and brought to Life the Stage,  
Where the sad Muses, since they lost their Queen,  
Ne'er till that Day did tune their Songs agen.  
The ravish'd Crowds ador'd You as You rode,  
Like Spring in April coming first abroad. (A3)<sup>138</sup>

Banks idealises Anne Stuart not only by virtue of her status as royal princess, but also as heir apparent to the throne. Therefore, he stresses her royalty and superior moral nature, which he contrasts to his own insignificance, and employs the topos of the trifle, apologising for the unworthiness of his offering: "But when I consider that no Present, of what Value soever, can be made suitable to One of Your Illustrious Character, It gives me Encouragement to hope this Trifle may not be less Acceptable to Your Royal Goodness, than a Pitcher of Water was to the Great Monarch of the World, from the Hands of a Mean Soldier" (A2v). However, as he seemingly points to the humbleness of his gift, he also enhances its value through the allusion to the humble soldier that offered Alexander the Great a helmet full of water when he and his army were sorely oppressed with thirst crossing the Gedrosian desert.<sup>139</sup> Banks further characterises his dedicatee as a caring

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<sup>138</sup> In the prologue, which he also dedicates to the princess, Banks again represents Anne as a source of solace to the nation in these dark times, "When all that we thought great and good was gone, / And the whole World did in that Deluge drown" (A4). De Pando has shown that here Banks reasserts "Anne's crucial role as the emotional anchor of England" while William was battling against France "Let conquering William send abroad his Darts, / Secure for him you rule his Peoples Hearts" (27).

<sup>139</sup> The fact that in the classical story Alexander rejects the gift and pours the water into the ground might seem to work against Banks, but that is not necessarily the case. Alexander thanked the soldier, but refused to drink because there was not enough water to share with his men. The gesture strengthened his leadership and reinvigorated his army (Worthington 230-231).

princess and a model of behaviour. In line with the providential view of the change of regime which had been promoted by William and Mary, Banks emphasises the princess's piety and its effect on the nation's welfare: "'Twere Prophaneness in me any longer to divert with my rude Pen Your Divine Thoughts and Precious Moments, that are still employ'd Above, in imploring Blessings for the Nation, and more prophane to sully the Chrystal Mirrour of so many Incomparable Virtues with the coarse Breath of Mortal Praise" (A2v). The divinisation is completed by portraying her as sharing the company of angels and himself as unfit to praise her: "I most humbly ask Leave then to withdraw from a Subject so much above my Capacity and Merit; (a Task fit only for the Angels You converse with)" (A2v).

The idealisation of Anne Stuart owing to her status as heir to the crown is also found in Congreve's dedication of *The Mourning Bride* (1697). The author emphasises her excellence arguing that British subjects pay tribute to her not out of duty, but because they freely decide to do so owing to her outstanding qualities:

That high Station, which, by Your Birth You hold above the People, exacts from every one, as a Duty, whatever Honours they are capable of paying to Your Royal Highness: But that more exalted Place, to which, Your Virtues have rais'd You, above the rest of Princes, makes the Tribute of our Admiration and Praise, rather a Choice more immediately preventing that Duty. (7)

Congreve reiterates his devotion to the princess claiming that recognition from subjects is aroused by the experience of having her as a source of inspiration: "The Publick Gratitude is ever founded on a Publick Benefit; and what is universally Bless'd, is always an universal Blessing. Thus from Your self, we derive the Offerings which we bring; and that Incense which arises to Your Name, only returns to its Original, and but naturally requires the Parent of its Being" (7).

Likewise, in the dedication of *Fatal Friendship* (1698), Trotter divinises Princess Anne by mentioning her superior virtues and royal birth, which inspire the absolute loyalty of the nation. In order to accentuate the dedicatee's magnificence, Trotter expresses the futility of attempting to depict her virtues and the ensuing necessity of resorting to silence as the most effective compliment:

Permit me, Madam, to decline attempting your Encomium, as a mark both of the most profound respect, and highest Admiration, best express'd by an awful silence, which confesses you above all Praise; but were it possible for some Nobler Pen to reach the height of your Perfections, the Work wou'd be Superfluous, since they need not ev'n the Lustre of your Rank to make 'em conspicuous to the World, or to engage Mankind in your Service. (A2v)

The idealisation of Anne Stuart, emphasising her lineage in combination with her virtuous character, was certainly opportune given the dynastic threat posed by her younger brother, James Francis Edward.<sup>140</sup> Indeed, rather than bringing attention to the princess's beauty, dedicators extol her exemplariness. This strategy was grounded on Anne's irreproachable conduct in the years following the Revolution, besides responding to a widespread increase of anxiety about the use of profane speech and improper behaviour in the theatre in the 1690s.<sup>141</sup> It is then not by coincidence that in their dedications Congreve and Trotter connect the panegyric of the princess with the moral message and exemplary models of behaviour present in their tragedies. In the epistle of *The Mourning Bride* (1697), Congreve vindicates the effectiveness of tragedy in promoting high moral standards and the valuable service that dramatists offer society: "there are Multitudes, who never can have Means, nor Opportunities of so near an Access, as to partake of the Benefit of such Examples. And to these, Tragedy, which distinguishes it self from the Vulgar Poetry, by the Dignity of its Characters, may be of Use and Information" (7). Moreover, as he claims that the princess's virtue has inspired his work, Congreve makes his dedicatee an active participant in providing the audience with moral guidance, although he implies that dramatists like himself are the ones responsible for conveying it to other sections of society:

For they who are at that distance from Original Greatness, as to be depriv'd of the Happiness of Contemplating the Perfections and real Excellencies of Your Royal Highness's Person in Your Court, may yet behold some small

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<sup>140</sup> It was not until the signing of the treaty of Utrecht in the spring of 1713 that Louis XIV finally acknowledged Queen Anne's title as well as the Hanoverian succession, after which James Francis Edward Stuart was banished from France (Gregg, "Anne").

<sup>141</sup> This process culminated with the issuing of a proclamation suppressing immoral and irreligious references in any play in 1697 and the publication of Jeremy Collier's *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* the following year, in which he attacked Dryden, Vanbrugh and Congreve among other playwrights (Winn, *Queen Anne* 232). Furthermore, the Society for the Reformation of Manners had previously denounced the theatre, making practical attempts at censorship through presentments to the Grand Jury, arrests of actors or orders from the Lord Chamberlain.

Sketches and Imagings of the Virtues of Your Mind, abstracted, and represented in the Theatre. (7-8)

In this manner Congreve insists on the idealisation of Princess Anne, describing her as possessing an impeccable character, while he modestly wishes to have accomplished his purpose of encouraging righteousness: “If in this Piece, humbly offer’d to Your Royal Highness, there shall appear the Resemblance of any one of those many Excellencies which You so promiscuously possess, to be drawn so as to merit Your least Approbation, it has the End and Accomplishment of its Design” (8).

Similarly, in the dedication of *Fatal Friendship* (1698), Trotter maintains that her work serves a moralising function, namely “to discourage Vice, and recommend a firm unshaken Virtue” (A2v). The author also justifies presenting the play to the princess by stating that she has taken her as her model and adds to her praise lamenting the inevitable lack of resemblance: “[the play] must receive your Royal Highnesses Approbation, since ’tis the same Great design as that of your own Admirable Life, but with what disadvantage imitated! how must I Blush for the Copy when I cast my Eyes upon such an Excellent Original!” (A2v).

Another noticeable difference between the dedications inscribed to Mary and Anne Stuart after the Revolution and the majority of dedicatory epistles addressed to women is the absence of references to their husbands. Neither King William nor the Prince of Denmark is commended in these epistles, which could be explained by the fact that both Mary and Anne occupied powerful positions, the first as queen regnant and the second as heir apparent to the throne. Even though the Bill of Rights bestowed the executive power of the crown on William alone, after the Regency Act of 1690 was passed, Mary exercised royal power in her name and William’s whenever he was away (Claydon, “William”).<sup>142</sup> As for Anne’s husband, the Prince of Denmark never played a major role in public affairs.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> The Regency Act enabled Mary to exercise regal power in both her name and William’s at any time the king was away, but gave William the authority to override her acts (Schwoerer 222). Mary reigned alone during four regencies, starting in June 1690 and in each year thereafter until her death on 28 December 1694.

<sup>143</sup> In Hill’s dedication of *Rinaldo* (1711) the lack of reference to the prince is all the more expected, for he had passed away in 1708

Regarding the attitude of dedicators when presenting their works and requesting favour, all of them display the expected humility and resort to different themes to belittle their offerings. In the epistle to *The Volunteers* (1693), Anne Shadwell employs a pathetic tone, almost depicting desperate circumstances in an attempt to elicit Queen Mary's sympathy. While expressing her gratitude for the support that Shadwell enjoyed as poet laureate and historiographer royal, she subtly introduces the topos of the poor poet in order to propitiate a positive response: "The little Wit of our poor Family, as well as the best part of the Subsistence, perisht with my Husband; so that we have not where withall, worthily to express our great Acknowledgment due for the Support and Favour we have already received" (157). Anne further asks the queen to attend or command a performance of the play, stressing again her precariousness and reminding the monarch of her husband's loyalty:

This Consciousness of our own Disability, will much shorten your Majesties Trouble, we shall only therefore, without more words, and with all Humility, and Profound Respect, throw this our last Play at Your Majesties Feet, begging Your Acceptance of it; and that You wou'd once Honour it with Your Presence, which will be the greatest Happiness that can arrive in this World to me his Unfortunate Widow, and from this World, to Your Faithful Servant, my Deceas'd Husband. (157)

Nevertheless, Anne's financial situation could not be so critical, for she had inherited leases of two properties in Salisbury Court, together with rights to the rent for the Dorset Garden theatre and money (Bennet, "Shadwell"). Her intention was probably to increase the symbolic capital generated by her late husband during his lifelong career and perhaps to reap some material reward from the queen.

As for Banks, he similarly assumes the customary lowly stance in the dedication of *Cyrus the Great* (1696) to Princess Anne, portraying himself as a miserable, persecuted author. The dramatist endeavours to compensate for the fact that his tragedy had remained unperformed for fifteen years, which had undeniably decreased its symbolic capital. While humbly referring to his "Unworthiness" and consequent "Presumption," he demonstrates his joy at Anne's recommendation of his work: "I Confess I am so transported at the Honour You have done this poor Play, that I know not in what Terms to pay my Devotion to Your Highness" (A2). In the poem inserted in the dedication, Banks reiterates his elation for being

championed by the princess and, in order to emphasise his propitious situation, he evokes the adverse circumstances which he had previously experienced:

My humble Muse, then, that did groveling lye,  
Soar'd like an Eagle through the Vaulted Sky,  
Forgot the Disappointments that she had,  
Rav'd with fierce Joy, and ran with Pleasure mad:  
Two Labours of her Brain, this Play the third,  
Through Spite and Envy were the Stage debarr'd,  
Cast and ne'er Try'd, Condemn'd and never Heard.

.....  
But time he hopes, and Pity in your Breast,  
Will bring 'em both to Life, as this is blest (A3-A3v)

As Fred Tupper has pointed out, Banks appears to rely on his dedicatee to authorise the acting of two other unperformed plays, *The Island Queens* and *The Innocent Usurper*, once she accesses the throne (32, qtd. in De Pando 27).<sup>144</sup> With this second dedicatory epistle addressed to Anne, the playwright undoubtedly aimed at cultivating a sustained relation of patronage, which nonetheless seems to have been suspended at some point. Although Banks did manage to have *The Albion Queens* (the revised version of *The Island Queens*) staged in March 1704, the text was issued without a dedication. Furthermore, the author failed to relaunch his dramatic career and died two years afterwards, owing money to two creditors (Brayne).

In his dedication of *The Mourning Bride* (1697) to Anne Stuart Congreve also adopts the traditional humble pose. The dramatist underrates his own talent, labelling his play “imperfect” and alluding to his own “Inexperience or Incapacity” (8), despite the wide acclaim earned by this tragedy and his previous works. After heaping praise on the princess’s virtue, he pretends to show genuine disinterest by claiming that his only motivation in writing was to obtain his dedicatee’s approbation and persuade her “that a

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<sup>144</sup> The year before the staging of *Cyrus the Great*, Banks published *The Innocent Usurper* (1694), which had allegedly been written in 1684 and was banned in the 1692-1693 season for its reflections upon the accession of William and Mary. Also written in 1684, *The Island Queens* was similarly banned, due to its controversial representation of the enmity between Elizabeth I and Mary Stuart (Brayne).

Play may be with Industry so dispos'd (in spite of the licentious Practice of the Modern Theatre) as to become sometimes an innocent, and not unprofitable Entertainment" (8). Thus, as he explicitly seeks the princess's sanction at a time when the theatre was under siege by the Societies, Congreve seems to be endeavouring to appropriate her symbolic capital in order to invest it, rather than merely his own, in the defence of his livelihood.<sup>145</sup>

Even though Trotter, like most playwrights, uses the strategy of humility in the epistle of *Fatal Friendship* (1698) to compliment Princess Anne, nonetheless she opens her address advancing her own merit, as she comments on the favourable reception of her work: "My happy success in one bold Attempt, not only encourages but forces me to a much greater, aspiring to lay this Trifle at your Royal Highness's Feet" (A2). Though she employs the conventional theme of the trifle, she also expresses her determination to make her mark in the theatrical world and attempts to rouse empathy in her dedicatee by referring to the difficulties which she needs to surmount as a female author: "when a Woman appears in the World under any distinguishing Character, she must expect to be the mark of ill Nature, but most one who seems desirous to recommend her self by what the other Sex think their peculiar Prerogative" (A2). The playwright humbly requests the princess's protection, pointing out that she will inevitably be criticized as a woman in a man's world, and that her dedicatee's favour will keep her safe:

This, Madam, makes me fly to the Protection of so great a Princess, though I am sensible so high an Honour must raise me many more Enemies, making me indeed worthy of Envy, which I am but too well secur'd from in my self (though an undertaking so few of my Sex, have ventur'd at, may draw some Malice on me) but 'tis my happiness that the thing which will most reasonably make me the object of Enmity, will be my safety against the effects of it. (A2)

Trotter seems to have accumulated sufficient symbolic capital with *Fatal Friendship* to include a dedication to Anne and she exhibits it before her readers with the intention of

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<sup>145</sup> The threat posed by anti-stage sentiment was very real, particularly in the last five years of the seventeenth century. The neighbours of the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre attempted to prevent its reopening in October 1695 by appealing to the king's bench (Luttrell 3: 452). Congreve himself was accused of debauchery and blasphemy for *The Double-Dealer* in May 1698, together with Thomas D'Urfey for *The Comical History of Don Quixotte* (Luttrell 4: 378-379).



publicly asserting herself as a professional playwright.<sup>146</sup>

In the last dedication addressed to Anne Stuart, prefixed to the opera *Rinaldo* (1711), impresario Aaron Hill praises the monarch for having contributed to the blooming of British music by attracting renowned musicians and performers: “Musick . . . appears in Charms we never saw her wear till lately; when the Universal Glory of your Majesty’s Illustrious Name drew hither the most celebrated Masters from every Part of Europe” (n.p.). Hill conceives the epistle as an opportunity to convince Queen Anne that opera offers endless possibilities to bring greatness to the nation and indirectly requests her support insisting on the suitability of this genre and lamenting that, “for want of due Encouragement,” it might “grow faint and languish” (n.p.). Nevertheless, he shows himself optimistic while asserting his own efforts to develop opera in the Italian manner in London: “My little Fortune and my Application stand devoted to a Trial, whether such a noble Entertainment, in its due Magnificence, can fail of living, in a City, the most capable of Europe, both to relish and support it” (n.p.). In order to secure the queen’s favour and obtain her backing in this enterprise, Hill plays the patriotic card. He presents his opera as “a Native of your Majesties Dominions and . . . consequently born your Subject” and appeals to national pride as he begs her assistance “to see the English Opera more splendid than her Mother, the Italian. (n.p.).

The dedications addressed to female members of the royal family reveal that this practice of gift-exchanging not only benefitted playwrights but also patronesses, who welcomed the acclaim brought by their clients. This is why Mary of Modena, whose popularity was at a low ebb since her arrival in England, stands out as one of the preferred dedicatees in the second half of the 1670s. Moreover, a significant feature of this group of epistles is the change from the hyperbolic idealisation of the dedicatees’ physical beauty during Charles II’s reign to the emphasis on their virtue after the Glorious Revolution. The growing importance attached to morality in the mid-1690s becomes apparent in dedications, owing to the authors’ concern for defending drama’s place in society and securing their livelihood. Therefore, they canvassed the support of powerful protectors in their epistles.

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<sup>146</sup> Together with her fellow dramatists Delarivier Manley and Mary Pix, Trotter had been brutally satirised in *The Female Wits*, an anonymous play produced at Drury Lane in 1696 with considerable success (Van Lennep 467).

## 5. The royal mistresses

It is no secret that in the course of his life Charles II had a wide array of mistresses and female favourites: Lucy Walter, Elizabeth Boyle,<sup>1</sup> Eleanor Byron, Catherine Pegge, Barbara Palmer, the actresses Mary ‘Moll’ Davis and Eleanor ‘Nell’ Gwyn, Louise de K roualle and Hortense Mancini, among others. For the most part, the love affairs were short-lived, except for the relations with Palmer, Gwyn and K roualle, who were publicly acknowledged as royal mistresses and with whom the King was involved from 1660 to 1668, 1668-1671 and 1671-1675, respectively (although, given the nature of these relations, the chronology is only approximate). The three of them were the recipients of eight dedications, as the table below shows:<sup>2</sup>

Table 4: Dedications addressed to the Charles II’s mistresses

Dedicator, play	Dedicatee
Wycherley, <i>Love in a Wood</i> (1672)	Barbara Palmer, duchess of Cleveland in her own right
Duffett, <i>The Spanish Rogue</i> (1674)	Eleanor Gwyn
Behn, <i>The Feign’d Curtizans</i> (1679)	
Lee, <i>Sophonisba</i> (1676)	Louise de K�roualle, duchess of Portsmouth in her own right
Lee, <i>Gloriana</i> (1676)	
Crowne, <i>The Destruction of Jerusalem</i> (1677)	
Otway, <i>Venice Preserv’d</i> (1682)	

Even though the corpus might appear small in comparison to the total number of dedications addressed to women during Charles II’s reign (44 dedications and 10 inscriptions), it is significant that in all cases the plays were presented to the royal mistresses after their love affairs had finished, which indicates both their long-lasting power over the

<sup>1</sup> The list is not complete. As Pepys reports, John Evelyn referred to Lady Byron as “the King’s seventeenth whore abroad” (8:182; 26 April 1668). Despite the exactitude of the number, it is impossible to know if Evelyn was exaggerating.

<sup>2</sup> Another mistress, Elizabeth Boyle, was the dedicatee of Killigrew’s *Claricilla* (1663). However, there is no dedicatory epistle proper, but merely an inscription mentioning the dedicatee in the title-page, located between Killigrew’s name and the imprint.

monarch (particularly, where the relationship had taken place after the Restoration and had resulted in children), as well as their will to reinforce their status. It is similarly noteworthy that Louise de K roualle, the most contested of the royal mistresses, was among the women who received more dedications during the reign of King Charles, together with Anna Scott, duchess of Monmouth (4), and Mary of Modena, the second duchess of York (4).

### **Dedicatees and dedicators**

The majority of these dedications were composed when the dedicatees had already been granted honours, but had lost their pre-eminence or had been challenged either by a female rival or critics. As for the dedicators, except for William Wycherley, who given his short dramatic production and the recognition he gained as a court wit can be considered an amateur author, the rest (Thomas Duffett, Aphra Behn, Nathaniel Lee and Thomas Otway) are classified as professional playwrights.

Barbara Palmer (1640-1709) was the first acknowledged mistress of King Charles after the Restoration. Barbara was a member of the Villiers family, her father, Viscount Grandison, being half-brother to the duke of Buckingham. Her liaison with Charles II seems to have begun in the weeks following his arrival in London in May 1660, for their first daughter, Anne, was born in February 1661 (Wynne, "Palmer"). The first honour which Barbara received was her husband's creation as Baron Limerick and earl of Castlemaine in December 1661 (Cockayne 3: 280).<sup>3</sup> The countess of Castlemaine gave birth to her first son with the king in June 1662, after which she and her husband lived separate lives.<sup>4</sup> Barbara gained further benefits from her position as royal mistress: she was appointed a lady of the bedchamber to Queen Catherine (1663-1673); she was created in her own right duchess of Cleveland, countess of Southampton and Baroness Nonsuch in 1670; she resided at Whitehall Palace (from 1663 until 1668) and was granted several substantial pensions for life, beginning at  1,000 a year in 1667 and reaching about  12,000 in 1674 (Wynne,

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<sup>3</sup> Barbara had married Roger Palmer, a royalist lawyer, second son of Sir James Palmer, in April 1659 (Wynne, "Palmer").

<sup>4</sup> Barbara bore the king a total of five children (two daughters and three sons) from 1661 to 1665, all of whom were acknowledged by the King and given the surname FitzRoy.

“Palmer”).<sup>5</sup> Nevertheless, by 1672, the year of the publication of William Wycherley’s *Love in a Wood*, the duchess of Cleveland had been replaced in the king’s affections both by Gwyn (whose sons were born in 1670 and 1671) and Kéroualle (her son being born in July 1672).

William Wycherley (1641-1716) belonged to a family of landowning gentry, who had had been settled at Wycherley Hall, Clive, Shropshire, since 1409 (McCarthy 4). His father, Daniel Wycherley exported funds to Charles I in exile and even once entertained him at his house. Having knowledge in the law, Daniel Wycherley was employed as a legal steward for several clients, for instance the marquess of Winchester of Basing House, Hampshire; as a result, he obtained several estates, including some from the marquess and a good revenue (Bennett, “Wycherley”). Daniel Wycherley had adequate resources for providing his son with a thorough education. At age fifteen William Wycherley was sent to France to cultivate his conversation skills and acquire polished manners at the salon of the *précieuse* Julie d’Angennes, daughter of the Marquise de Rambouillet.<sup>6</sup> In October 1659 Wycherley was admitted to the Inner Temple and the following summer he attended Queen’s College, Oxford, although he did not take a degree (Bennett, “Wycherley”). After serving in Ireland with the earl of Arran in 1662, Wycherley accompanied Sir Richard Fanshawe to Madrid during his diplomatic mission to Spain from February 1664-1665.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Barbara’s sons were similarly heaped with titles and dignities. The firstborn, Charles FitzRoy, was installed knight of the Garter in 1673 and created Baron of Newbury, earl of Chichester and duke of Southampton in 1675 (12.1: 135); the second son, Henry FitzRoy, was created duke of Grafton in 1675 and a knight of the Garter in 1680 (Cokayne 6: 43); the youngest, George FitzRoy, was made duke of Northumberland in 1683 and a knight of the Garter in 1684 (Cokayne 9: 740-741). Barbara also bore the king two daughters, Anne and Charlotte. The first married her relative Thomas Lennard, earl of Sussex, and the second Edward Lee, earl of Lichfield. Charlotte’s marriage to Lichfield brought Cleveland in connection to the earl of Danby, the lord treasurer, whom she wished to court (Wynne “Palmer”).

<sup>6</sup> Being disenchanted with the coarseness of Henry IV’s court, Madame de Rambouillet (1588-1665) began to give receptions for the great nobility and men of letters at the Hôtel de Rambouillet, which soon became remarked for their elegance and use of polite and refined language. The “Blue Room,” where she received her distinguished guests, progressively gave rise to a particular way of living and aesthetics which came to be known as “*préciosité*.” Preciosity longed a world of harmony, civility, with vaguely hellenised pseudonyms in which conversation revolved around the perfect alexandrine and topics such as the nature of pleasure, desire, hope, and envy (Browner). Wycherley became a Francophile and this stay had a determining influence on his writings. For instance, Manly in *The Plain-Dealer* is an adaptation of Elects, the protagonist of Molière’s *Le Misanthrope* (1666) (Bennett, “Wycherley”).

<sup>7</sup> Wycherley acquired a knowledge of Spanish, which allowed him to incorporate plot features of two of Calderón de la Barca’s plays in his first two comedies (Bennett, “Wycherley”).

As for Wycherley's literary production, *Love in a Wood* was the first of his four comedies: it was performed by the King's Company in March 1671 and entered in the Stationers' Register in October 1671 (Van Lennep 181). The play must have been popular, for the cast included Hart, Mohun and Kynaston, as well as star comedian John Lacy. Moreover, besides the first edition of 1672, there was a second one in 1694.<sup>8</sup> Rumour has it that the playwright and the duchess were engaged in an intimate relationship at the time.<sup>9</sup> Perhaps through his affair with Cleveland, Wycherley gained the attention of her cousin, the duke of Buckingham, who had formerly rescued Wycherley's father from his creditors in the mid-1650s (Boswell, "Footnotes" 345). The connection brought the author an appointment as one of the duke's equerries and on 19 June 1672 Buckingham made him captain-lieutenant of his own company (McCarthy 92; *CSPD* 184).<sup>10</sup> Meanwhile, his second comedy, *The Gentleman Dancing-Master* had been staged by the Duke's Company in late December 1671 or early in 1672 (see Downes 70). Thanks to his writings and familiarity with Buckingham, Wycherley earned the reputation of a court wit and became acquainted with the circle of courtiers and writers headed by King Charles, which included Rochester, Sackville, Lord Vaughan, Sedley and Etherege, among others.

The second royal mistress who was addressed dedications was Eleanor Gwyn (1651-1687). Gwyn had unknown origins and contemporary sources provide different alternatives.<sup>11</sup> She had sold oranges to play-goers at the King's theatre, before she became the leading comic actress of the King's Company in the second half of the 1660s. Her relationship with King Charles began in the winter of 1668 and Buckingham is said to have

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<sup>8</sup> The first edition was advertised in the Term Catalogue for 20 November 1671 (Arber 1: 87).

<sup>9</sup> Literary critic John Dennis attributed their acquaintance to the duchess's interest in the comedy. After the premiere of the play, Cleveland, passing Wycherley in her coach in Pall Mall, yelled at him, "You, Wycherley, you are a son of a whore." Wycherley took it as a compliment, recognising the allusion to a song in his play which concludes: "Great Wits, and great Braves, / Have always a Punk to their Mother" (18; 1.1). He seized the opportunity and invited her to the next performance, as Dennis reports: "she was that Night in the first Row of the King's Box in Drury Lane, and Mr. Wycherley in the Pit under her, where he entertained her during the whole Play" (410).

<sup>10</sup> *CSPD: Calendar of State Papers, Domestic: Charles II, 1673-1675*.

<sup>11</sup> In a satire her father is said to have died a debtor; Wood suggested that her grandfather was a canon of Christ Church, Oxford; another writer claimed that her father was a Captain Thomas Gwyn (Wynne, "Gwyn"). Her early years also remain uncertain: according to a contemporary story, Gwyn would have said that she had been "brought up in a bawdy-house to fill strong water to the guest" (Pepys 8: 503).

encouraged it, in an attempt to break Barbara Palmer's influence on the monarch (Wynne, *The Mistresses* 97). Gwyn retired from the stage in February 1671, after she had given birth to her first son by the king in May 1670.<sup>12</sup> Contrarily to Cleveland, Gwyn was not brought to court, which might have caused a scandal on account of her low birth, although a house was leased for her at the fashionable Pall Mall, conveniently backing onto St James's Park (Wynne, "Gwyn"). Gwyn obtained additional advantages: besides an honorary position as lady of the privy chamber, she was given an annual pension of £4,000 from 1674, which was raised to £5,000 in 1676, and she also received several grants, properties and leases of land (Wynne, "Gwyn").

Gwyn's former career as an actress bestowed her with a low social capital, particularly in comparison to the duchess of Cleveland. This probably encouraged playwrights with an equally low capital to choose her as their dedicatee. Gwyn was offered two plays: Duffett's *The Spanish Rogue* (1674) and Behn's *The Feign'd Curtizans* (1679). Thomas Duffett (fl. 1673-1676) is said to have had Irish origins and probably issued from the middle-class. Before turning to playwriting, he was a milliner at the fashionable New Exchange on the Strand (Pritchard, "Duffett"). *The Spanish Rogue* was his first play and it appears to have been staged by the hirelings of the King's Company in March 1673 (Van Lennep 204). The first and only edition was advertised in the Term Catalogue for 9 February 1674 (Arber 1: 163). The dedication to Gwyn was therefore addressed the year when she was granted her first pension, although she was also unsuccessfully appealing to the king for a title.<sup>13</sup> To some extent, she could benefit from the boost of prestige that the epistle would have brought her, even though the play may not have accumulated a significant quantity of symbolic capital. As for Duffett, he went on to produce travesties of popular plays for the King's Company, authoring a total of four works which were staged

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<sup>12</sup> The boy was baptised Charles, Buckingham and Buckhurst (not only a close friend to the king, but also Gwyn's former lover) being two of the godparents. Eleanor's second son, James, was born in December 1671 (Wynne, "Gwyn").

<sup>13</sup> In 1673 there were rumours that Gwyn was to be made countess of Plymouth (Wynne, *The Mistresses* 52). She was never granted a title, though a contemporary account dated 1688 claimed that, were it not for the king's death, Gwyn would have been created countess of Greenwich (Wynne, "Gwyn").

between December 1673 and August 1675.<sup>14</sup> However, none of his subsequent plays included a dedicatory epistle.

The second work which was offered to Gwyn was Behn's *The Feign'd Curtizans* (1679). Aphra Behn (c. 1640-1689) was born Eaffrey Johnson at Harbledown, Kent, her father being, Bartholomew Johnson, a barber in Canterbury, and her mother, Elizabeth Denham, who issued from a trading family in Smeeth (Todd, "Behn").<sup>15</sup> Prior to the restoration of Charles II, Behn got in contact with the courtier Thomas Killigrew, either because she acted as a royalist agent, like Killigrew himself, or as a copyist for him and others. Through his influence, she was sent on a mission to Antwerp as an agent for the then secretary of state Lord Arlington (Todd, "Behn"). Despite this advantageous connection with the patentee of the King's Company, Behn began a career as a professional playwright for the Duke's Company in 1670 and eventually became one of the most prolific writers of the period with more than twenty plays. The dramatist wrote eight plays between 1670 and 1678, but she did not dedicate any of these pieces, either because she was unable to secure a patron or because she estimated her symbolic capital insufficient for such an attempt.<sup>16</sup> *The Feign'd Curtizans* was produced most probably in early March 1679, for it was licensed for printing on 27 March 1679 and published soon afterwards, being listed in the Term Catalogue for May 1679 (Van Lennep 276; Arber 1: 350). After this first epistle to Gwyn, Behn addressed dedications to the duke of York (*The Rover*, Part 2), the duke of Grafton (*The Roundheads*), the earl of Arundel (*The City-Heiress*) and even to another royal mistress, duchess Mazarin (*The History of the Nun*).<sup>17</sup> Behn may have been emboldened to address Gwyn by the fact that the actress-mistress had been formerly connected to the theatre world and therefore was

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<sup>14</sup> *The Empress of Morocco* (staged December 1673, published 1674) was a burlesque of Settle's popular tragedy; *The Mock-Tempest* (staged November 1674, published 1675) of Shadwell's *The Tempest*; and *Psyche Debauch'd* (staged May 1675, published 1678) of Shadwell's opera. Another play of the King's Company, *The Amorous Old-Woman* (staged March 1674, published 1674), has been attributed to Duffett. He also composed a masque, *Beauties Triumph* (1676), for a girl's boarding-school in Chelsea.

<sup>15</sup> Behn possibly married a merchant of German extraction named Johann Behn, but she lost him some time before 1669 through death or separation (Todd, "Gwyn").

<sup>16</sup> This lapse should not be surprising, since Behn not only bore the stigma of being issued from the middle-class and working as a professional writer, but also of being a woman.

<sup>17</sup> Since the last work is a novella, the dedication to duchess Mazarin is not analysed in this study.

one of the members of the king's entourage with lower symbolic capital.<sup>18</sup>

As for Louise de K roualle (1649-1734), she was born into a minor Breton noble family which apparently had become impoverished, her father being Guillaume de Penanco t, count de K roualle, and her mother the daughter of the marquess of Timeur and of Kergolay (Wynne, "K roualle"). After serving as maid of honour to Charles II's sister, Henriette-Anne, duchess of Orleans, from 1668 until the duchess's premature death in June 1670, Louise was taken into the service of Catherine of Braganza. According to Bishop Burnet, having already caught the eye of the English monarch during Orleans's visit for the signing of the treaty of Dover in 1670, Louise was sent to London at the instigation of Louis XIV (337).<sup>19</sup> Louise became the king's mistress in collusion with the French ambassador, the marquis of Croissy, and the secretary of state lord Arlington, who invited her to stay at Euston during the annual trip of the court to Newmarket in October 1671 (Wynne, "K roualle"). On 29 July 1672, Louise bore a son to the king, naming him Charles, and soon began to reap benefits from her position as the king's chief mistress. On 19 August 1673 she was created Baroness Petersfield, countess of Fareham and duchess of Portsmouth and was made at the same time a lady of the queen's bedchamber. In 1674, at King Charles's request, Louis XIV granted K roualle the French estate of Aubigny for life and afterwards to her son.<sup>20</sup>

K roualle seems to have been the royal mistress who reaped the highest profit. In October 1676 her main pension was established at  8,600; her annuities had risen to  11,000 by December 1680 and in the last four years of Charles's reign, with the addition of many payments, she ended up gathering some  20,000 a year (Wynne, "K roualle"). Moreover, at some point before her son was born, the duchess of Portsmouth was given her own

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<sup>18</sup> Todd argues that Behn wanted to dedicate the play to a woman, but because of her association with theatre bawdiness and lack of an impeccable private life, she needed a royal mistress (*Secret Life* 246-247). According to Todd, Behn was much attracted to Hortense, duchess Mazarin, but it was not the moment, because of the accusation of being capable of poisoning the king: "the Dutchess of Mazarine understands poysoning, as well as her Sister; and a little Vial, when the King comes there, will do it" (qtd. in Todd, *Secret Life* 480n24). Despite K roualle's power, Behn disliked her for being a French agent. Todd states that it was probably Otway who suggested Gwyn to Behn.

<sup>19</sup> Louise left Paris for London in the company of the duke of Buckingham, the king's special envoy to France, who wished to oust Barbara Palmer (Burnet 337).

<sup>20</sup> The boy was given the last name of Lennox and was created baron of Settrington, earl of March and duke of Richmond on 9 August 1675 and on 9 September lord of Torboulton, earl of Darnley and duke of Lennox in the Scottish peerage (Cokayne 10: 836).



apartments at Whitehall. Her lodgings, which occupied some twenty-four rooms of the Matted gallery, were luxuriously decorated with tapestries and paintings brought from Versailles, Japanese cabinets, Chinese objects, exquisite clocks and silver.<sup>21</sup> The apartments served as visible evidence of Portsmouth's influence and pre-eminence, for she organised lavish entertainments and provided access to meeting the king. Nevertheless, the duchess also suffered the rivalry of Nell Gwyn, who continued to enjoy the king's favour, and Hortense Mancini, duchess Mazarin, who arrived in England in December 1675. The former could not compete with Portsmouth for political power, but the latter soon began to jeopardise her position.<sup>22</sup>

It is not surprising then that in 1676 Nathaniel Lee (c. 1645-1692) addressed two dedications to K roualle. The dramatist was the son of Richard Lee DD, a prominent Anglican clergyman, and he was brought up in a bright, active, intellectual milieu (Armistead, "Lee").<sup>23</sup> Lee was nominated by his father's patron, the earl of Salisbury, to attend the prestigious Charterhouse School (c. 1658-1665) and later entered Trinity College, Cambridge, where he remained as pensioner (1665), scholar (1668), bachelor (1669) and possibly fellow (1669-1671). It seems that the duke of Buckingham became impressed with Lee's elegy on the death of General Monck (which appeared in a collection of verses in 1670) before or during his visit to be installed as chancellor of the university in the summer of 1671. Buckingham took the young poet to London, although he soon lost interest in him. After a failed attempt at an acting career, Lee turned to playwriting under the protection of the earl of Rochester, to whom he dedicated his first work. *The Tragedy of Nero* was staged by

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<sup>21</sup> John Evelyn found K roualle's apartments impressive when King Charles took him there in 1683 and later noted: "that which ingag'd my curiositie, was the rich & splendid furniture of this woman's Appartment . . . Here I saw the new fabrique of French Tapissry, for designe, tendernesse of worke, & incomparable imitation of the best paintings; beyond any thing, I had ever beheld" (343).

<sup>22</sup> According to Sarah Nelson, the French ambassadors reported to Louis XIV their fear that Mancini would replace K roualle (5). However, the affair with Mancini was brief and by 1677 Portsmouth had regained her position.

<sup>23</sup> Dr. Richard Lee was ordained an Anglican deacon in 1637 and thrived as a presbyterian pluralist during the interregnum before conforming to the Church of England in 1662 (Armistead, "Lee").

the King's Company probably in May 1674 and proved popular (Van Lennep 216).<sup>24</sup> This enabled Lee to produce two more plays with the King's and dedicate them to the duchess of Portsmouth: in 1675 *Sophonisba*, possibly premiered in May and published in November (Van Lennep 232; Arber 1: 218), although the imprint bears the date "1676"; and in 1676 *Gloriana*, acted in January, without much impact, and printed in May (Van Lennep 242; Arber 1: 236).<sup>25</sup>

Louise de K roualle was offered a third dedication in 1677: Crowne's *The Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus Vespasian*, his second work after the success of *Calisto* (1675).<sup>26</sup> This heroic tragedy was produced in two parts, which were probably premiered on 12 and 18 January 1677, respectively (Van Lennep 253-254). It featured extraordinary spectacle and pageantry and, according to Saint- vreumont, "met with as wild, and unaccountable Success, as the *Almanzors* [Dryden's *The Conquest of Granada* in two parts]" (n.p.). The two parts of *The Destruction* were printed together in May 1678 (Arber 1: 273). The fourth play to include a dedication to K roualle was Otway's *Venice Preserv'd* (1682), his most famous tragedy, which was first staged on 9 February 1682 and printed in May 1682 (Van Lennep 306; Arber 1: 485).<sup>27</sup> There were further shows on 21 April and 31 May, for which new prologues and epilogues were composed by Dryden and Otway to celebrate the return of the duke and duchess of York from Scotland (Van Lennep 308, 309). It is possible that Otway chose K roualle as the dedicatee of *Venice Preserv'd*, because she was

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<sup>24</sup> The success of this tragedy prompted the rival company, the Duke's, to mount a play on the same topic, *Piso's Conspiracy*, which opened in August 1675 (Hume, *Development* 288). *The London Stage* mistakenly assigns this work to the King's (Van Lennep 235).

<sup>25</sup> Performances of *Sophonisba* are recorded in November 1675, December and November 1676 (Van Lennep 232, 240-241, 252) and the additional editions published in 1681, 1685, 1693 and 1697 bear witness to its continued popularity. *Gloriana*, however, failed on the stage. Downes remarked that it was "well Acted, but succeeded not so well as the others [i.e. *Sophonisba* and *Theodosius*]" (80). As Hume notes, this failure aggravated the conflict between the actors of the King's Company (*Development* 314; see also Van Lennep 242). Even so, a second edition appeared in 1699.

<sup>26</sup> After *Calisto*, Crowne wrote a comedy for the Duke's Company, *The Country Wit* (1676). In the dedication he proudly boasted that it was also "honor'd with the Kings favour" (17).

<sup>27</sup> Jessica Munns has questioned the suitability of dedicating to K roualle a work in which the heroine, Belvidera, is a foreign courtesan ("Otway").

instrumental in persuading the king to allow his brother to return.<sup>28</sup>

Due to their privileged positions, Palmer, K roualle and Gwyn exploited their favour with the monarch to benefit others, particularly their families.<sup>29</sup> The three of them were also able to influence court politics owing to the lack of clear boundaries between public and private matters. Barbara Palmer and Louise de K roualle were more active in court affairs, because of their high-class origins and the fact that they resided and held offices at Whitehall, which enabled them to condition some of the appointments of the king’s ministers. In 1662 Barbara Palmer secured the appointments of lord Arlington and lord Berkeley as secretary of state and keeper of the privy purse, respectively, and in 1667 she contributed directly to the earl of Clarendon’s downfall from government by putting her apartments at the disposal of the lord chancellor’s enemies (Wynne, “Palmer”).<sup>30</sup> As for K roualle, when Arlington’s fortunes started to decline in 1673, she gave her support to the earl of Danby and she also procured a post in the king’s bedchamber for Danby’s son in 1674. About this period, the duchess of Portsmouth became more influential in foreign affairs: she expressed her gratitude to King Louis XIV by interceding—and even participating in the discussions—between King Charles and the French ambassadors (Wynne, “K roualle”).

Eleanor Gwyn’s political engagement increased in the late 1670s, when her friendship with Buckingham and Monmouth associated her with the opposition to the lord treasurer Danby and the duke of York (Wynne, “Gwyn”).<sup>31</sup> The intense rivalry between Gwyn and Portsmouth over Charles’s attentions expanded into the political arena in popular

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<sup>28</sup> In October 1681 the duke had offered K roualle to draw  5,000 from his Post Office revenue annually for fifty years (Wynne, *The Mistresses* 148).

<sup>29</sup> Barbara Palmer procured the appointment of her relative Henry Glenham as bishop of St Asaph (Wynne, “Palmer”). In 1672 Eleanor Gwyn obtained an annual pension of  100 for her sister Rose and her husband, which was increased to  200 after Rose was widowed in 1674 (Wynne, “Gwyn”). Louise de K roualle also managed to arrange the marriage of Philip Herbert, earl of Pembroke, and her sister, Henriette-Mauricette, who came to England in 1674 and was granted an annual pension of  600 (Wynne, “K roualle”).

<sup>30</sup> Barbara and Clarendon’s mutual hostility had reached one of its highest points after Queen Catherine’s arrival in 1662, when the lord chancellor overtly disapproved of the king continuing his affair with Barbara and of her appointment as lady of the queen’s bedchamber (Seaward, “Hyde”).

<sup>31</sup> Together with the earl of Middlesex, the earl of Rochester and even Danby, Gwyn mediated between Buckingham and the king in 1677, when Buckingham was confined in the Tower for his speech on the dissolution of Parliament and, after he was released, he was given permission to lodge with her. In 1679 Gwyn tried unsuccessfully to reconcile the king and Monmouth, who was gaining support as a possible Protestant successor (Wynne, “Gwyn”; Yardley; T. Harris, “Scott”).

culture, as contemporary satires indicate.<sup>32</sup> Eleanor Gwyn came to represent the interests of the Protestant cause and York's removal from the line of succession for having converted to Catholicism, as opposed to the duchess of Portsmouth, who symbolised the pernicious influence of Catholic France on the king. Nonetheless, Portsmouth's attitude during the Exclusion Crisis was far more complex than what popular satire could relate for, being in a precarious position, she shifted her political strategies and support as much as she needed. When her association with Danby led to criticism in the House of Commons in 1679, Portsmouth formed an alliance with the earl of Sunderland and participated in the secretary of state's plot to invite William of Orange over to England in 1679 (Wynne, "K roualle"). In addition, after opposition against her escalated early in 1680, Portsmouth broke with York and reconciled herself with Monmouth, and she also supported the Exclusion Bill of 1681.<sup>33</sup>

The royal mistresses occasionally secured patronage for playwrights, not only because of the aristocratic appeal of drama, but also because of its traditional use as a propaganda tool. Barbara Palmer assisted Dryden at the beginning of his dramatic career. At her request, *The Wild Gallant* was staged at court soon after its premiere in February 1663, even though the play had not been particularly well received at the Theatre Royal (Hammond).<sup>34</sup> Eleanor Gwyn engaged Otway as tutor to her eldest son in June 1680, for which he was to be paid  5,000 per annum (Warner 14). Apparently, Gwyn's support of Otway was abruptly interrupted when he dedicated *Venice Preserv'd* to Louise de K roualle, who gave him twenty guineas for the panegyric (Warner 11, 15). Additionally, K roualle

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<sup>32</sup> Contemporary comments on their animosity abound. Madame de S vign , for instance, wrote: "the actress is as haughty as mademoiselle: she insults her, she makes grimaces at her, she attacks her, she frequently steals the king from her, and boasts whenever he gives her the preference" (Hamilton 386; letter 92). *A Pleasant Battle between Two Lap Dogs of the Utopian Court* (1681) and *A Dialogue between the Duchess of Portsmouth and Madam Gwin at Parting* (1682) are good examples of their depiction in popular literature. See also Wynne, *Mistresses*, 244-247, 249-251.

<sup>33</sup> Wynne claims that Portsmouth's break with York was caused by resentment at Mary of Modena's support of her second cousin Hortense Mancini ("K roualle"). After the failure of the exclusionists, Portsmouth's position became unstable again and thus she decided to make peace with York.

<sup>34</sup> The play's failure and its ensuing lack of symbolic capital, probably discouraged Dryden from dedicating the play and he wrote instead a preface justifying its publication. However, he expressed his gratitude to Palmer in a poem entitled "To the Lady Castlemaine, upon Her Encouraging His First Play" (*Poems 1649-1680* 1: 45-46), which appeared in print in *A New Collection of Poems and Songs* (1674). These grateful lines might have accompanied a presentation copy of the play offered to Castlemaine, although there is not any reference in the text.

supported the theatre by commissioning a performance of Dryden's *The Indian Emperour*, which was acted by the Duchess of Portsmouth's servants, as shown by a prologue and epilogue composed for the occasion by Thomas Duffett.<sup>35</sup>

Cleveland, Gwyn and Portsmouth strengthened their position as dedicatees of drama through their ability to influence the king and their political power; yet, at the same time, their privileged positions were precarious and often contested by different sectors of society. What most critics resented was not that the king seemed controlled by his sexual appetites, but that he allowed his mistresses to interfere in politics. Recorded anecdotes and satirical pieces bear witness to the animosity against Barbara Palmer, for instance. She was first called Charles's "Royal Whore" in a satire attributed to Andrew Marvel, probably composed soon after the Restoration.<sup>36</sup> The duchess of Richmond told Barbara that she hoped she would come to the same end as Jane Shore, Edward IV's mistress who died in extreme poverty (Andrews 166). In addition, there was one occasion when three masked men (probably from the court circles) accosted her in St James's Park, referring to Jane Shore and how she ended her life despised and abandoned. After the incident, the king ordered the gates of the park to be closed (Masters 56).

If Eleanor Gwyn was not as harshly criticised as Cleveland and Portsmouth, because she was not perceived meddle in matters of state, as it was observed in a satirical poem: "She hath got a trick to handle his p—— / But never lays hands on his scepter. / All matters of state from her soul she does hate, / And leave to the politic bitches" (Lord 1: 420, ll. 3-6). Nevertheless, Gwyn had to make a greater effort to consolidate her status than Palmer or Keroualle for, even though she was a much-admired actress, performers were generally treated as servants and were still marked by social stigma, particularly in the case of women.

The most unpopular of the king's mistresses was undoubtedly Louise de Keroualle, for she was thought to represent the interests of France. Powerful Whig families, like the Russells and the Cavendishes would not countenance receiving her in their residences. Lord

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<sup>35</sup> The pieces were included in Duffett's *New Poems, Songs, Prologues and Epilogues* (1676). Kenneth Cameron argued that this troupe was expressly created to give a private performance on a temporary stage, probably at Kéroualle's private apartments in Whitehall or in the Newmarket palace, at some point between May 1673 and September 1675 (92).

<sup>36</sup> "In a slashed doublet then he came to shore. / And dubbed poor Palmer's wife his Royal Whore" (Lord 2: 155, ll. 11-12).

Shaftesbury called her “a creature of France . . . by birth the lowest of the gentry there, of no fortune, of worse fame . . . a very indifferent beauty, and of wit hardly enough for a woman” (Christie 311). Louise was also harassed at court: two courtiers bribed her favourite negro page and tried to get him drunk in the hope that he would reveal some compromising secrets about his mistress. The king had them banished from court.

What critics and detractors did not comprehend was that King Charles needed to exhibit his love conquests in order to assert his masculinity. The king’s sexuality was a matter of state and, since the royal couple had not produced an heir yet, Charles’s manhood was, to some extent, questioned. As Katherine Crawford has rightly argued with regard to sexual culture in the French Renaissance, the royal mistresses served to demonstrate sexual virility: “satisfying a woman (thought to be sexually voracious by nature) without succumbing to either fatigue or feminine wiles asserted the King’s sexual prowess” (196-197). However, many critics felt that the king had become a slave of his lust and had allowed his mistresses get out of control and interfere in politics. Moreover, the existence of various illegitimate children begotten by the king and the lack of a lawful heir (other than the king’s brother) remained a potential source of political disorder. As Sonya M. Wynne has argued, the mistresses’ status remained an unsolved question, due to the clash “between those who equated the open acknowledgement of a royal mistress with sexual and political disorder . . . and thought that such women should be social pariahs, and those like the King who found mistresses not in the least subversive and desired that his court would accept their presence” (“The Brightest Glories” 43).

## **Dedications**

The fact that the rhetoric of dedications suited the royal mistresses’ aim of enhancing their status accounts for the use of a variety of resources based on Neoplatonic literature whose purpose is to divinise the dedicatee. On the other hand, these epistles also seem to reveal the anxiety that authors experienced about their literary and social ambitions.

The qualities for which the royal mistresses were praised are chiefly those traditionally ascribed to noblewomen: beauty, modesty (in the sense of lack of vanity), affability, sweetness, fame and generosity. Noteworthy, dedicators sometimes present these

qualities as attributes of seduction in a more or less explicit manner. Resorting to the topos of love as war, Behn points to Gwyn's "Illustrious Beauty, the Charms of that tongue, and the greatness of that minde" as the graces which have "subdu'd the most powerfull and Glorious Monarch of the world" (*The Feign'd Curtizans* 87). In the dedication to *The Destruction of Jerusalem* (1677), Crowne, using the same cliché and stressing the controlling power of beauty over men, seems to justify Charles II's affair with Kéroualle: "Kings have worn your sex's chains with as much pleasure as their crowns, and conquerors have followed your triumphs with as much delight as they have seen their own attended by Kings" (231).

Although Palmer, Gwyn and Kéroualle received all their dedications after having given birth to the king's children, only in certain cases were they praised for their motherly virtues. In the dedication to *The Feign'd Curtizans* (1679), Behn not only compliments Gwyn's sons presenting them as promising leaders and thus as a blessing to their mother and to humanity, but she also pays tribute to Gwyn and to the king by foregrounding their descent:

Nor can Heaven give you more, who has exprest a particular care of you every way, and above all in bestowing on the world and you, two noble Branches, who have all the greatness and sweetness of their Royal and beautiful stock; and who give us too a hopeful Prospect of what their future Braveries will perform, when they shall shoot up and spread themselves to that degree, that all the lesser world may finde repose beneath their shades. (87)

In his dedication of *Venice Preserv'd* (1682) to Kéroualle, Otway includes a digression in which he praises her son, putting emphasis on the education that she has provided him with: "as you have taken all the pious care of a dear Mother and a prudent Guardian to give him a noble and generous education; may it succeed according to his merits and your wishes" (200). Kerstin P. Warner suggests that this may not have been an idle claim, but rather "a polite indication of availability to serve as the boy's tutor, as he had instructed Nell Gwyn's [eldest] son by the king" (50).<sup>37</sup> While expressing his best wishes for the young Charles Lennox, Otway seems to be hinting at the convenience of engaging a competent

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<sup>37</sup> This indirect request is consistent with the fact that Otway incurred a debt with the publisher Jacob Tonson in June 1683, as shown by a signed receipt: "the same Mr. Otway does hereby acknowledge himself indebted to Jacob Tonson in the sum of eleven pounds which he hereby engages to pay upon demand. Witness his hand: Thomas Otway" (Ghosh 1: 28).

instructor, as well as to please the duchess by suggesting that Lennox would turn into a loyal son and subject (perhaps more loyal than Monmouth, although Otway clearly avoids anything which might offend the king or his still beloved eldest son):<sup>38</sup>

May he grow up to be a Bulwark to his illustrious Father, and a Patron to his Loyal Subjects, with Wisdom and Learning to assist him, whenever call'd to his Councils, to defend his right against the encroachments of Republicans in his Senates, to cherish such men as shall be able to vindicate the Royal Cause, that good and fit servants to the Crown, may never be lost for want of a Protectour. May He have courage and conduct, fit to fight his Battels abroad, and terrifie his Rebels at home. (200)<sup>39</sup>

As for the duchess of Cleveland, the epistle addressed to her by William Wycherley does not even allude to her children, nor does he attribute any maternal qualities to her in the dedication to *Love in a Wood* (1672). Such allusions would not have been consistent with Wycherley's intention of projecting the image of the conquering rake that could lend him prestige in the libertine courtly circles.<sup>40</sup>

Given that the royal mistresses' capacity to rule the king's heart depended on their allure, playwrights celebrated their beauty by means of hyperbolic and periphrastic constructions abounding in superlatives and absolute terms: "you have that perfection of Beauty" (Wycherley, *Love in a Wood* 7); "your Grace, who as you are the most Beautiful" (Lee, *Sophonisba* 81); "so excellent and perfect a creature," "the most perfect lovely thing" (Behn, *The Feign'd Curtizans* 86). Natural beauty is stressed as opposed to that enhanced by artificial means. Wycherley, for instance, refers to his patroness as "a Lady, who

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<sup>38</sup> The French Ambassador, Barrillon, believed that Louise had hopes for her son to succeed the king if he divorced the queen (P.R.O., PRO 31/3/143, Barrillon to Louis XIV, 13 July 1679).

<sup>39</sup> In fact, Warner states that K roualle was at the time pressing her son's claim to the Crown and that she was counting on Shaftesbury's complicity to that end (50). While it seems plausible that Portsmouth might have tried to manoeuvre in the political climate of the Exclusion Crisis to her son's (and her own) advantage, it is very unlikely that Shaftesbury would have sided with her, for he was anti-French, anti-Catholic, he had denounced the duchess's influence on the king, and he was advancing Monmouth's claim ( T. Harris, "Shaftesbury").

<sup>40</sup> John Lacy addressed dedications to her eldest and youngest sons in that very same year, in an attempt to capitalise on Barbara's newly granted title. Given the young age of the dedicatees (they were ten and seven years old, respectively), the epistles were undoubtedly intended as an indirect tribute to the duchess, whom Lacy characterises as "so admired and beautiful a mother" (*The Dumb Lady* 8).



stands as little in need of Flattery, as her Beauty of Art” (*Love in a Wood* 5).<sup>41</sup> Authors resorted to these rhetorical devices in order to convey deference and recognition of their inferior status. Thus, they drew on the images, tropes and themes of Neoplatonic literature to idealise their dedicatees’ beauty, taking it as evidence of their moral virtue, and characterised themselves as deferential suitors, worshipping the dedicatees from afar. The only exceptions were Wycherley, who adopted the insouciant pose of a court wit and made a very limited use of the Neoplatonic conventions, and Duffett, who imitated in part this nonchalant attitude mocking some of the standards of dedications.

The Neoplatonic identification of physical beauty with virtue is present in Duffett’s, Lee’s and Crowne’s dedications. Duffett refers to Gwyn as “the most perfect Beauty, or the greatest Goodness in the World” (*The Spanish Rogue*, n.p.). In the dedication to *Sophonisba* (1676), Lee explains that he must pay homage to K roualle because she is “the most Beautiful, as well in the bright appearances of body, as in the immortal splendors of an elevated soul” (81). In fact, Lee structures the epistle around the conceit of the sun (a metaphor to refer to K roualle), which symbolises the supreme Idea of Good in Platonism and Neoplatonism.<sup>42</sup> This association reappears in the dedication of *Gloriana* (1676): “Your Grace, who as You are the *Brightest*, are likewise the *Noblest Object* in the World; You enliven, like the *Sun*, with Universal influence, which induces me to hope that a *Beam* from Your Grace may reach The Humblest of Your Servants” (151, emphasis added).<sup>43</sup>

In the dedication of *The Destruction of Jerusalem* (1677) to K roualle, Crowne constructs a highly elaborated compliment, introducing a digression on beauty with Neoplatonic resonances. He argues on the complete sovereignty of female beauty over men: “Beauty (Madam) has received from Nature a dominion so pleasing, that men contend not

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<sup>41</sup> The same motif can be found in Duffett’s, Crowne’s, Behn’s and Otway’s dedications. The significance of artless beauty was also discussed in *The Book of the Courtier*: “uncontrived simplicity . . . is most attractive to the eyes and minds of men, who are always afraid of being tricked by art” (Bk 1; 86-7).

<sup>42</sup> The use of the imagery of the sun is noteworthy: the author is “*dazl’d*” by K roualle, “the source of so many *rayes*” and he is astonished by her “Smiles of more delightful *Shine* than April *suns*” (81, emphasis added). The sun also functioned as a traditional symbol of kingship and it was also likened to God: “much more frequent than general comparisons is the special one between the sun, the ruler of the heavens, and the king, ruler of the state” (Tillyard, 83).

<sup>43</sup> The comparison with the sun is also used to compliment K roualle for being a patroness of the arts. In Greek mythology, the god of the Sun, Apollo, was also the god of song and music, and he was closely connected to the Muses (Grimal, “Apollo” 47-50).

with more ambition for empire over their own sex, than subjection to yours” (231). He amplifies the previous idea and introduces the theory of the heavenly ascent through rational love: “Men are exalted to love beauty by the same faculty which lifts ‘em to adore Heaven; and there is a kind of divinity in beauty, which makes love to be a kind of religion: Beauty is certainly the fairest visible image of divinity in the world” (231).<sup>44</sup> He then connects the digression with the praise of K eroualle’s beauty while complimenting her modesty: “That these, Madam, are the rights and possessions of beauty, you cannot but know; that they are therefore yours all the world knows, but you” (232).

Another strategy related to Neoplatonic literature, which draws on the tradition of medieval courtly love, is the dedicator’s assumption of the role of the deferential suitor. In his dedications, Lee metaphorically associates the asymmetrical-hierarchical relation between dedicator and dedicatee (who is, by definition, the social superior) to the relation between the poet-lover and the female beloved. In the dedication of *Sophonisba* (1676), Lee adopts the persona of the hero of the tragedy, Hannibal, and resorts to the theme of beauty extolling the lady’s eyes, which cause the wound of love: “Hannibal . . . making his approaches to your Grace . . . sees[,] with new bleedings, eyes more attractive than those of Rosalinda” (81). It is also significant that K eroualle is compared to the character of Rosalinda, Hannibal’s mistress. In *Gloriana* (1676), Lee negatively contrasts himself with Alexander the Great, the epitome of courage, in order to stress his awe of K eroualle and to praise her beauty: “the most renowned Conquerour, even Alexander himself, if he now liv’d, would rather stand expos’d alone to the Javelins of an enrag’d multitude, than make his Address to a Beauty so powerfully arm’d as Your Grace” (151). Behn also emphasises the beauty of Gwyn’s eyes which she even characterises as divine: “even those distant slaves whom you conquer with your fame, pay an equall tribute to those that have the blessing of being wounded by your Eyes, and boast the happiness of beholding you dayly” (*The Feign’d Curtizans* 86).

It is noteworthy that Lee, Crowne and Behn resorted to the language of warfare, which, besides being connected to topos of love as a battle, had been used by Italian Renaissance painters to assert the dignity of their profession. In *The Lives* (1550), Giorgio

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<sup>44</sup> According to Ficino, the union with God is pursued through a gradual ascent of the soul towards heaven, by turning away from all material things in the search for the ultimate source of beauty. This doctrine is central to Ficino’s ethics and metaphysics, and is related to medieval mysticism.

Vasari used this language to comment on the achievements of Michelangelo: “Costui supera e vince non solamente tutti costoro c’hanno quasi che vinto già la natura, ma quelli stessi famosissimi antichi, che sì lodatamente fuor d’ogni dubbio la superarono” (13).<sup>45</sup> Peacock explains that Renaissance artists strove for respectability, a preoccupation which constantly surfaced in treatises on the arts and which led them to argue that their talent was a gift of God and a sign of their “divine entitlement to gentility” (204): their skill conferred on them the power to serve the policies of the monarchy and the aristocracy, as well as to fulfill their personal ambitions (223).<sup>46</sup> Similarly, Restoration playwrights put their pens at the service of those who needed to strengthen their social status (for instance, the royal mistresses), hoping to exhibit their own potential and to be rewarded for it.

Wycherley also adopts the pose of the dedicatory-suitor, but he partially shuns the Neoplatonic reverence, presenting himself instead as a man of fashion. Wycherley quickly moves on from the conventional humble stand to a bold, plain-dealing tone, hinting subtly at his personal involvement with the duchess: “I . . . cannot but publicly give your Grace my humble acknowledgements for the favours I have receiv’d from you” (5). He declares himself “jealous,” fearing “to have Your Graces Favours lessen’d,” and he describes her sending for a copy of the play as the best way “to win a poor Poets heart” (6). Wycherley allows himself this licence because of his special relationship with the dedicatee.<sup>47</sup>

The influence of the Neoplatonic theory of love in the dedications and the submissive attitude assumed by authors, together with the hyperbolic praise of the dedicatees brought forth the divinisation of these ladies. Nonetheless, the insistence on the worship of

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<sup>45</sup> “He has surpassed and conquered not only all those predecessors who have already conquered nature, but also the most renowned masters who commendably conquered it without any doubt” (my translation).

<sup>46</sup> Two examples discussed by Peacock are Nicholas Hilliard’s “A treatise concerning the arte of limning” (U. Edin. L., MS La 3.174; c. 1600) and Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo’s *Trattato dell’arte della pittura, scoltura, et architettura* (1584). Hilliard insists that artistic talent is a gift of God, which manifests the artists’ gentility and membership of the social élite (Peacock 204). Lomazzo stresses that portraits reproduce the political power of the sitter (which in turn confers power to the artist) and that, therefore, portraiture should be restricted to the flower of both sitters and painters. He considers portraiture, in Peacock’s words, “as a privileged space where the sitter’s political power and the artist’s social status reinforce each other” (210).

<sup>47</sup> Other than taking advantage of Cleveland’s interest in him and capitalising on her recently awarded title, Wycherley might have sought her patronage following in Dryden’s steps, who benefited from her patronage in the early stages of his dramatic career.

the dedicatee varies from author to author, being subtler in Duffett's and Behn's dedications, and stronger in Lee's and Crowne's. Duffett alludes to Gwyn's beauty, affability and lack of arrogance as "the greatest Miracle of the Age" (n.p.). Behn praises Gwyn by stressing that the honours which she receives are inadequate for her, given her divine nature: "so Excellent and perfect a Creature as your self differs only from the Divine powers in this; the Offerings made to you ought to be worthy of you, whilst they accept the will alone" (*The Feign'd Curtizans* 86). In *Sophonisba* (1676) Lee begins his dedication observing that he must bestow his "adorations" on K roualle and expresses his gratitude for her protection and encouragement through the metaphor of the sun: "your Grace . . . did shed mightier influence, and darted on me a largess of glory answerable to your stock of Beams" (81). He concludes the epistle pledging his creativity to her, indirectly suggesting that playwrights offer their dedicatees fame, of which they are the tacit custodians: "I am resolv'd to look up to you daily, and dedicate my Life and Labours to your Grace, to spend all the store of my yet unexhausted fancy in your unbounded Fame" (81).<sup>48</sup>

In the dedication of *The Destruction of Jerusalem* (1677), Crowne explicitly connects K roualle to the divinity on account of her beauty by alluding to the Judgement of Paris: "in a nation too where you have such numerous and considerable rivals for that dominion, some perhaps as powerful as any in the world, you, like the goddess of beauty, gain the Golden Ball, not from humble mortals, but your fellow goddesses" (232). In addition, he wittily finishes his compliment with a complex metaphor in which the duchess's divinity is established by placing her portrait (the epistle) at the entrance of the sacred temple (the play): "I fix then your Grace's Image at this Jewish Temple Gate, to render the building sacred, nor can the Jews be angry with so beautiful a profanation; and in guiding them to you, they are conducted like their ancestors to repose and happiness, in the most fair and delightful part of the world" (234).

The recourse to the rhetoric of Neoplatonism differed among these authors for several reasons. In the libertine circle which Wycherley was entering, the Neoplatonic theory of love was relegated to ridicule for artificially ignoring sexual appetite. Duffett seems to

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<sup>48</sup> The influence of Neoplatonism is present throughout this tragedy. As Armistead has noted, the female characters in *Sophonisba* are portrayed as "inspirers of Ideas of different kinds of love" (*Nathaniel Lee* 44).

have adopted the Neoplatonic conventions as a fashionable means of seeking patronage, but he also flouted some of the norms of dedications. For instance, he frankly acknowledges in a whimsical tone that he has not received any previous favours from Gwyn and justifies his decision claiming that “a Play in print, without an Epistle Dedicatory, is now like a Modish Gallant without a Mistriss, or a Papist without a tutelar Saint” (n.p.). Duffett can partially deviate from the standards, adding a playful touch, because Gwyn’s social status was originally lower and she had a reputation for being impudent.<sup>49</sup> Behn’s female nature hinders her full appropriation of the Neoplatonic conventions, although it is noteworthy that, as a form of deference, she distances herself from Gwyn every time she makes reference to the attributes of her gender.<sup>50</sup> The other significant consequence of Behn being a female author is that she shows greater diffidence about her literary merit and adopts a humbler stand. Thus, she apologises meekly for not having dedicated one of her plays to Gwyn before: “I with shame look back on my past Ignorance. . . , yet even now though secure in my opinion, I make this Sacrifice with infinite fear and trembling” (*The Feign’d Curtizans* 86).

The identification of the author with the Neoplatonic lover served to enhance the relation of patronage and to dignify the profession of letters, on account of the creating power attributed to beauty: men of letters were stirred to compose great works by contemplating the beauty of their patronesses, in the same manner as in past ages the love of their ladies prompted knights and heroes to execute great deeds or the courtier to follow the path of perfection. By means of these strategies, authors associated patronage, whose primary function was to offer protection, with feudal fealty and devotional reverence: patrons should keep their clients from censure and impecuniosity, as lords guard their vassals and God his creatures. Thus, these texts abound in requests for support and, particularly, in expressions of gratitude for the assistance received, since the existence of a personal relation between the

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<sup>49</sup> Bishop Burnet described her as “the indiscreetest and wildest creature that ever was in a court” (474).

<sup>50</sup> Behn alludes to “all the Charms and attractions and powers of your Sex,” and praises Gwyn while simultaneously criticising the extended denial of female wit: “’Tis this that ought to make your Sex vain enough to despise the malicious world that will allow a woman no wit, and bless our selves for living in an Age that can produce so wondrous an argument as your undeniable self, to shame those boasting talkers who are Judges of nothing but faults” (87).

author and the dedicatee added to the author's symbolic capital.<sup>51</sup>

Even when the playwright acknowledges the lack of a prior connection with his patroness, as Duffett does with Gwyn in the epistle to *The Spanish Rogue*, he still invokes her protection against criticism: "For if this Censorious Age will submit to the most perfect Beauty, or the greatest Goodness in the World, under your Protection it will be safe" (n.p.). In the dedication to *Gloriana* (1676), Lee resorts to the topos of the poor poet, presenting himself as destitute, and appeals to K roualle to ameliorate his unlucky destiny and to raise his hopes: "Judge then how unfit I am, blasted in my hopes, and press'd in my growth by a most severe if not unjust fortune. 'Tis greatly done to raise the depress'd, which makes me apply my self to Your Grace" (151).<sup>52</sup> It is doubtful that Lee's circumstances were so desperate, despite the failure of his play, but the petition undoubtedly functions as an indirect compliment, for it implies that K roualle wields great power and depicts her as goddess capable of controlling the fortunes of mortals.

In the dedication to *Venice Preserv'd* (1682), Otway likewise pictures himself as poor poet, adopting a submissive tone: "Your Grace, next Heaven, deserves it [the play] amply from me; That gave me life, but on a hard condition, till your extended favour taught me to prize the gift, and took the heavy burthen it was clogg'd with from me: I mean hard Fortune" (199). In Otway's case the reference to poverty was not a literary topos, but rather a true condition. Besides regularly complaining about lack of money, Otway appears to have incurred debts and he was even threatened with incarceration in debtors' prison (Warner 11).<sup>53</sup> He thanks K roualle for protecting him from critics and for stepping in when he was cut off from royal patronage:

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<sup>51</sup> Hagestad also pointed to the persuasive effect of mentioning past favours received from the dedicatee: "If the author had the advantage of a personal connection with an individual of good name, then that was to be demonstrated; that was the setting of a crown upon the author's worthiness" (332).

<sup>52</sup> Lee belonged to a large family (he had nine or ten siblings), but with comfortable finances (Dr. Richard Lee was made Chaplain in Ordinary to King Charles sometime in the mid-1670s). By the time of the publication of *Gloriana*, three of his tragedies had been produced and the second, *Sophonisba*, had been much applauded (Armistead, *Nathaniel Lee*, "The Playwright and His Milieu," 17-31).

<sup>53</sup> According to the tract *Les Soupirs de la Grande Bretagne* (1713), attributed to Charles Gildon, Otway owed  400 to his vintner at the time of his death (67).

When I had enemies, that with malicious power kept back and shaded me from those Royal Beams, whose warmth is all I have, or hope to live by; Your noble pity and compassion found me, where I was far cast backward from my blessing. . . . You have in that restor'd me to my native Right, for a steady Faith, and Loyalty to my Prince, was all the Inheritance my Father left me. (199-200)

Otway thus establishes a connection between patronage and loyalty, presenting himself as a royalist. At the same time, he presents a flattering image of the woman who was usually derided as a foreign courtesan and a French agent by stressing the duchess's crucial role in reconciling a subject to his king.

Acknowledgment of obligations to the patron is a staple feature in dedications. Wycherley introduces it too in his epistle to *Love in a Wood* (1672), even if he mentions the favours received from Barbara Palmer with a comic note, as if he did not intend to boast about them. However, he clearly stakes his claim to her patronage and observes that to proclaim her approval of his comedy adds to his prestige:

the world might know your Grace did me the honour to see my Play twice together; yet perhaps my Enviars of your Favour will suggest 'twas in Lent, and therefore for your Mortification; then, as a jealous Author, I am concern'd not to have your Graces Favours lessen'd, or rather, my reputation; and to let them know, you were pleas'd, after that, to command a Copy from me of this Play. (6)

Lee opens the dedication to *Sophonisba* (1676) humbly attributing its success to the support granted by members of the court: "If *Sophonisba* receiv'd some applause upon the stage, I arrogate nothing from the merit of the Poem, but as I ought with the humblest acknowledgments and profoundest gratitude, impute it to the favourable aspects of the Court-Stars" (81). The expression "Court-Stars" alludes to the attendance of their majesties, and perhaps the maids of honour too, at the premiere or some other time during the first run.<sup>54</sup> In fact, three performances of *Sophonisba* dated April 30, May 4 and 7 1675, appear in the lord chamberlain's list, indicating the presence of the king and queen at two of them and

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<sup>54</sup> In the dedication of the first part of *The Comical History of Don Quixote* (1694), D'Urfey likewise uses the expression "a Constellation" (A2) to refer to the maids of honour, who attended one of the performances (see p. 244)

payments of £10 and £20 (Nicoll 307; “Appendix B”).<sup>55</sup>

In the dedication to *The Destruction of Jerusalem* (1677), Crowne metaphorically indicates that he was favoured by K roualle as well as by the king: “the few flowers [the two parts of *The Destruction*] that a poor poet brings to strew in your way . . . come from gardens warm’d by the lustre of your favour, and watered by royal bounty, which you caus’d to be shower’d upon it” (232-233). In addition, he significantly presents himself as the duchess’s vassal, as he stresses that his works “attend you not only as born in general vassalage to your beauty, but as creatures that received life from the concurrence of your favour” (233). That the plays were well received on stage is attested by a reference in the “Epistle to the Reader” in which Crowne congratulates himself for “the world having been kind” to them (235).

The playwright’s subservience is manifested in the fact that he needs to ask permission before presenting his work. Behn emphasises from the opening of the dedication of *The Feign’d Curtizans* (1679) that Gwyn has given her consent: “Your permission, Madam, has inlightened me” (86). In a very complimentary manner, stressing the social difference between them, Behn composes the panegyric through the metaphor of the tribute (the dedication) offered to a goddess (Gwyn), while highlighting that the playwright herself has been granted a privilege: “how Madam, would your Altars be loaded, if like heaven you gave permission to all that had a will and desire to approach ‘em, who now at distance can only wish and admire, which all mankinde agree to do; as if Madam, you alone had the pattent from heaven to ingross all hearts” (86). As the finishing touch, Behn celebrates the good fortune that she and her contemporaries enjoy for having the privilege of beholding Gwyn, contrary to “succeeding ages who . . . shall Envy us who lived in this [age], and saw those charming wonders which they can only reade of, and whom we ought in charity to pity, since all the Pictures, pens or pencills can draw, will give ‘em but a faint Idea of what we have the honour to see in such absolute Perfection” (86). Implicitly, Behn reminds her dedicatee that the play contributes to enhance and preserve her reputation.

The choice of a royal mistress as a dedicatee functioned as a non-subversive manner

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<sup>55</sup> Their majesties must have been satisfied with the play, for it was acted before them again that year on November 6 and December 29 (Nicoll 308). Additionally, this tragedy was revived late in 1680 or early in 1681, when King Charles was in Oxford for the parliamentary session he had called there (Armistead, *Nathaniel Lee* 44). Dryden wrote a new prologue for the occasion. In the case of *Gloriana*, they attended only one performance, on January 29 1676 (Nicoll 308).



of expressing ambition or frustration with the competitive system of patronage. Authors longed for the great honours and privileges which these ladies enjoyed due to their beauty and sought recognition on the grounds of their literary merit. Just as the Elizabethan sonneteers presented these feelings in a socially accepted manner through the theme of unrequited love and Neoplatonism (as Arthur Marotti convincingly argued), Restoration playwrights recuperated the possibilities of Petrarchism, making use of its two predominant modes of discourse: praise of the beloved and complaint. The first is transformed into the idealisation of the dedicatee and the second morphs into the author's lamentations for lack of success on stage or unfair criticism.

Literary ambition is also mentioned explicitly in these dedications. Some authors express their hopes unashamedly, even with a touch of irony, as Duffett does when he justifies the dedication to Gwyn: "If I am the first that has taken the boldness to tell you this, in Print, 'tis because I am more ambitious than all others to be known by the Title of, Madam, Your Admirer, and humblest Servant" (n.p.). As for Wycherley, while seemingly apologising for his presumption in presenting his play, he exposes the hypocritical modesty commonly shown by authors in their dedications through the witty analogy between poets and cheats: "'tis very hard for a new Author, and Poet too, to govern his Ambition; for Poets, let them pass in the world never so much, for modest, honest men, but begin praise to others, which concludes in themselves and are like Rooks, who lend people money, but to win it back again" (5). Like Wycherley, Crowne reflects on the self-seeking purpose of dedications, although what he attempts to convey in a high-flown language is the humble attitude of the poet who cannot give his patroness renown. To do so, Crowne draws on a metaphorical comparison of poetic creation with a garden: "we, who place your statues in our gardens, add no glory to you, only make our own walks delighted in by our selves, and frequented by others, which else would lye neglected by both" (*The Destruction of Jerusalem*, 234).

Wycherley, Lee and Behn also write bitterly about the precariousness of the commercial stage and, through allusions to laurels and titles, hint at the public recognition they long for. Wycherley reflects that dedications and praise of their patrons are actually motivated by self-interest: "they [poets] offer Laurel and Incense to their hero's, but wear it themselves, and perfume themselves" (5). Lee, by contrast, resorts to this theme to emphasise his gratitude towards K roualle in the complimentary close and subscription: "For I declare

to be wreath'd in Lawrel from head to foot, is not comparable honour to that of being Madam Your Graces most humble and devoted servant" (*Sophonisba* 81). Behn transforms the fact that Gwyn had not been ennobled into a compliment to her modesty: "those glorious Titles which you your self Generously neglected, well knowing with the noble Poet; 'tis better far to merit Titles than to wear 'em" (*The Feign'd Curtizans* 87).

Besides expressing their frustration at the precariousness of the stage, in some of the epistles authors complain at the lack of appreciation of literary talent. In the dedication to *The Destruction of Jerusalem* (1677), Crowne bitterly criticises high-class society by exalting K roualle's "patronage of wit" and referring to it as a "province you may enjoy without any trouble from multitudes of pretenders, you need not fear lest the ambitious great ones of either sex invade you in it" (233). He sarcastically adds: "No, Heaven be thanked, we live in an age wherein men are content to want it, and to let others possess as much of it as they please" (233). While denouncing its widespread discredit, Crowne represents wit as precious and capable of conferring distinction on K roualle: "Your Grace then must both know and value the jewel well, which you will take up and wear, when it is not only flung into the dirt by others, but trod upon. And wear it safely you may. Wit may dress you in all the lustre it has, and never endanger you a blasting from the fascinations of envious and malignant eyes" (233-234).

By adopting the Neoplatonic rhetoric, authors presented themselves as the continuators of the pre-Civil War Neoplatonism promoted by Queen Henrietta Maria. Charles I's consort had promoted Neoplatonism as an appropriate mode of discourse for male courtiers to express political allegiance.<sup>56</sup> As a great lover of the theatre, Henrietta Maria sponsored dramatic entertainments imbued with the rhetoric of pastoral and Neoplatonic literature with a political agenda (Dillon 377).<sup>57</sup> At the Restoration authors resumed the use of

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<sup>56</sup> Contrary to most critics, which regarded the queen consort's masques and pastorals as apolitical, frivolous and ephemeral, Erica Veevers has argued that Henrietta Maria resorted to these entertainments to show "that she was active in the interests of Catholicism, and that her sponsorship of Platonic love was a means by which her religion was made acceptable at court" (134). The use of Neoplatonic motifs by authors does not imply that they were also Catholics, for as, Malcolm Smuts has shown, the queen was inclined to forge alliances both with English Protestants and Catholics.

<sup>57</sup> For instance, in December 1634, during the visit of Gregorio Panzani, the Pope's envoi, who was in charge of negotiating the formal exchange of agents between England and Rome, Queen Henrietta Maria appropriately entertained him with Davenant's *The Temple of Love*, in order to demonstrate that she was advancing Catholicism (Veevers 135).

this language in order to stress their intention to continue to serve the crown and the nobility, in exchange for patronage. Other authors might have ignored the significance of the Neoplatonic code, and they merely copied to please their dedicatees. When the dramatists' expectations were not met, for the realm of the theatre was marked by instability, they voiced their anxiety and nostalgia for times past. Thus, the use of Neoplatonic rhetoric empowered playwrights, allowing them to dignify their profession and to express unease about their position in the theatrical field or even about the patronage system itself.<sup>58</sup> It is highly significant that Lee, Crowne and Otway addressed their dedications to K roualle after experiencing disillusionment with the theatre and their former patron, the earl of Rochester. The three playwrights adopted the role of the devoted Neoplatonic suitor in their epistles to K roualle, possibly in order to emphasise the constancy of their clientelage, as opposed to the fickleness of patrons like Rochester.

While the royal mistresses were capable of supporting dramatists on account of their power and access to the monarch, yet their privileged positions were precarious and often contested. In exchange for their patronage, authors paid homage to them in the most complimentary manner, adopting the resources of Neoplatonic literature. In this sense, dedicatory epistles were used like portraits and court entertainments, other instruments of court display in which these ladies could exhibit their beauty, the richness of their garments and jewels, or their talents at dancing and singing.<sup>59</sup> Since the panegyric was a central element of their rhetoric, dedications suited the royal mistresses' need to consolidate their social position and inspire respect, a function that is made apparent by the fact that the plays were presented to them once these women were past the peak of their power. Thus, the epistles addressed to the royal mistresses afford good illustration of the complex economy of gift exchange underlying Restoration patronage.

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<sup>58</sup> However, their expectations were erroneous, for Queen Henrietta Maria was not an active patroness as far as financial protection is concerned. Eleanor Collins has argued that, contrary to the King's Men, who were granted compensatory payments in times of plague closure as well as gifts of clothes, no comparable support was given to the Queen's Men. In fact, the Queen's Men were not reliant on royal patronage for their success (23-24).

<sup>59</sup> King Charles's mistresses became preferred sitters for portraits. In fact, in the 1660s Barbara Palmer was Sir Peter Lely's primary muse, being depicted as Minerva, the Virgin Mary, Mary Magdalen and St Barbara (Dethloff "Lely"). Pepys records that Barbara Palmer danced in a masque produced at court in February 1665 (see Van Lennep 86-87).

## 7. Dedications addressed to gentlewomen and commoners

The last category comprises the dedications addressed to women ranking beneath the peerage, which have been combined in a single chapter due to their small number. They range from a baronet's wife to country gentry and include even a brothel keeper who is addressed ironically as a gentlewoman. The epistle dedicated to this woman, together with another which exhibits similarly parodic features, has been analysed in a separate section.

### 7.1 Dedications addressed to gentlewomen and commoners

The number of dedications addressed to gentlewomen and commoners amounts to eight. None of the dedicatees was offered more than a play. The authors were professional writers, except for Frances Boothby, Charles Cotton and Anne Wharton. In most cases, they were acquainted with their addressees and enjoyed a personal relation. The following table summarises the main information pertaining to these epistles:

Table 7: Dedications addressed to gentlewomen

<b>Dedicator, play</b>	<b>Dedicatee</b>
Flecknoe, <i>Erminia</i> (1661)	Martha Southcott, Lady Southcott
Thompson (?), <i>The English Rogue</i> (1668)	Mrs. Alice Barret
Boothby, <i>Marcellia</i> (1670)	Mary Yate, Lady Yate of Harvington
Cotton, <i>Horace</i> (1671)	Mrs. Stanhope Hutchinson
Wharton, <i>Love's Martyr</i> (c. 1685)	Mary Howe
G.J., <i>The Widdow Ranter</i> (1690)	Madam Welldon
Pix, <i>Queen Catharine</i> (1698)	Mrs. Cook of Norfolk
Trotter, <i>Love at a Loss</i> (1701)	Sarah Piers

### Dedicatees and dedicators

Although most of these ladies were members of the higher class, few biographical details are extant, since they belonged to the lower ranks of the aristocracy or the gentry.

Martha Southcott (1605-1661) was the eldest sister of the poet Sir John Suckling. Her parents were Sir John Suckling, secretary of state, and his first wife, Martha, the daughter of a London merchant named Thomas Cranfield (Clayton). The family descended from ancestors residing in Norfolk and Suffolk for at least four centuries and claimed descent from Thomas Esthawe, who held his lands by socage. Lady Martha's great-grand-father Richard, the sheriff of Norwich, was the first to adopt "Suckling" as surname. Her grandfather Robert also held offices in the local government, serving as sheriff (1564) and mayor (1572) and was elected MP (1571, 1586). By 1602 her father was secretary to the lord treasurer, he was knighted in 1616 and in 1619 was appointed master of requests. He became secretary of state in March 1622 and in August was appointed comptroller of Charles I's household (by purchase), an office he held until his death. On her mother's side, the lady's uncle was Lionel Cranfield, earl of Middlesex, who served as lord treasurer of England 1621-1624. In 1635 Lady Martha married Sir George Southcott of Shillingford, who was twice her age and four times widowed. The Southcotts were an old Catholic family, who had acquired the seat of Albery in the parish of Merstham, Surrey, back in Elizabeth's times (Randall 354). The marriage was short-lived, for Sir George committed suicide in 1639. She later married William Clagett, Esq. of Isleworth, and died in Bath in 1661. Lady Southcott was Suckling's favourite sister, their mother having died when he was only four and a half; the poet would frequently visit her at her house in Bishopsgate Street (Hazlitt xxxix).

Lady Martha was the dedicatee of Flecknoe's *Erminia* (1661). Flecknoe ventured into drama under the patronage of the duke and duchess of Newcastle. *Loves Dominion*, a pastoral drama, was printed in 1654 and the tragicomedy *Erminia* in 1661. Neither of these had been staged, and *Loves Dominion* was only produced by the Duke's Company in revised form as *Love's Kingdom* (1664), but "had the misfortune to be damn'd by the Audience" (Langbaine 202). *Erminia* seems to have been rejected by

both Killigrew and D’Avenant and afterwards was printed under the title *Emilia* in 1672.<sup>1</sup>

Nothing is known of Alice Barret, the dedicatee of *The English Rogue* (1668). The author, identified as T. T. on the title-page, was listed in Kirkman’s *Catalogue* (1680) as Thomas Thompson (5).<sup>2</sup> Thompson (fl. 1668-1682), described by Langbaine as an “author of the meanest Rank” (503), also wrote *The Life of Mother Shipton* (c. 1668-1671)—acted “nineteen days together with great Applause,” as stated on the title-page—and a non-dramatic work, *Midsummer-moon* (1682).<sup>3</sup> It is entirely possible that there was some connection between Thompson and Richard Head, the author of the first part of *The English Rogue* (1665) in association with Francis Kirkman, and a pamphlet, *The Life and Death of Mother Shipton* (1677).<sup>4</sup> McManaway even suggests that Head might have signed the play using a pseudonym, for he was a prolific writer and there is a considerable gap in his production between 1667 and 1672 (20). Head may have wanted to conceal his identity because of the scandalous and criminal episodes in the narrative, which were generally perceived as autobiographical. There are no records of performance of *The English Rogue*, an adaptation of Massinger’s *City Madam* (1658). The text included no actors’ names, although the title-page states that it was “Acted before Several Persons of Honour with great Applause.”

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<sup>1</sup> However, Hagestad claims that *Erminia* might have been finally accepted for production in 1665, when it was reprinted (287-288). J. Douglas Canfield has shown the relation between both plays: the characters are almost entirely the same, except for some minor changes, and the plots are identical.

<sup>2</sup> Other identities that might match these initials are: a gentleman named Thomas Thompson, of the Isle of Ely, who married Katherine Burroughs of St. Margaret, Westminster, on 8 April 1666; a gentleman of Canterbury, who married Mrs. Phoebe Hammond of Canterbury at St. Bride’s, London, on 29 June 1663; or a clerk, rector of Skegness, Lincolnshire, who married Mary Parish of Fishtoft on 29 October 1672 (McManaway 21).

<sup>3</sup> Tim Thornton argues that *The Life of Mother Shipton* was written between 1668-1671, drawing on the prologue and the fact that the bookseller, T. Passenger, was active in London in 1667 (83; Danchin 1: 295-296).

<sup>4</sup> The earliest account of Mother Shipton is dated 1641, but the narrative of Thompson’s play matches Head’s version, published in 1677. According to James McManaway, “the parallels between the two texts are of such a nature that Head could not easily have borrowed from Thompson” (19). He contends that Head’s narrative was written much earlier than 1677, for the account closes with the great fire of 1666, and the title-page states that the prophecies are collected “until this present year of 1667.”

The dedicatee of Boothby's *Marcellia* (1670) was Mary Yate of Harvington (d. 1696). Lady Mary was the daughter and co-heir of Humphrey Packington, Lord of Chaddesley Corbet, Worcestershire (Camm 262). Humphrey Packington was a Protestant but Mary's mother, Abigail Sacheverell, belonged to a Catholic family. Mary married a Catholic, Sir John Yate of Buckland, baronet, and became a widow in 1658. She was a staunch Catholic and dedicated her life to the maintenance and propagation of the Catholic faith in Harvington.<sup>5</sup> Frances Boothby's (fl. 1669-1670) parentage remains obscure. She might have been issued from the Gage family of Firle Place, Sussex, since she addressed her works to Mary Yate and Anne Aston calling them her relatives, and the Gages were linked by marriages both to the Yates and the Astons (Hughes, "Boothby"). She might have been related to Sir William Boothby, with whom Lady Yate had a remote family connection. Frances could also be the daughter of the prosperous merchant Walter Boothby of Tottenham, another relative of Sir William, who was born in the mid-1630s and still alive in 1690. Boothby was the first female playwright to have an original play professionally produced in London: her tragicomedy *Marcellia* was acted by the King's Company, probably in the summer of 1669, for it was licensed for publication on 9 October and advertised in the Term Catalogues for 22 November (Van Lennep 163; Arber 1: 20). The fact that it was authored by a woman was perceived as a scandal, as Elizabeth Cottington noted in a letter to Walter Aston: "I shall tremble for the poor woman exposed among the critticks" (Clifford 2: 60). The only other known work by Boothby is a poem lamenting *Marcellia's* failure, which has also been preserved in the papers of the Aston family.

Mrs Stanhope Hutchinson was offered Cotton's *Horace* (1671). Mrs Stanhope was sister to Isabella Cotton, the author's wife; their parents were Thomas Hutchinson of Owthorpe and Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, and his second wife Katherine (Sembower 23). In the address to the reader, Cotton explains that he translated

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<sup>5</sup> For instance, Lady Mary hosted the Franciscan Father Joachim of St. Anne when he came on a mission to England in 1656, and she founded three almshouses in Harvington. In 1679 she was obliged to sign a document acknowledging King Charles as head of the church ("Certificate of Dame Mary Yate of Harvington, acknowledging Chas. II as lawful King, head of Church etc.").

Corneille's *Horace* (1640) for the amusement of a young lady, who was, in all likelihood, his sister-in-law:

It was long since writ for the private divertisement of a fair young Lady, and ever since it had the honour first to kiss her hands, so entirely hers . . . that her leave, as principally necessary, was first to be obtain'd: neither was it without some difficulty, that she was prevail'd upon to give her consent, she being at the first proposal (either out of modesty (of which vertue no one has a more commendable share) or out of tenderess to her own reputation, or to mine) not very willing to have it printed: But at last (I know not how) she being overcome, and I (who had before parted with my Title) having now nothing to do to oppose it, it was condemn'd to the Press. (A3v)

The poet and translator Charles Cotton (1630-1687) was born at the family seat, Beresford Hall in Staffordshire, the only child of Charles and Olive, née Stanhope (Hartle). His father was a distinguished man with a circle of acquaintance which included John Fletcher, Ben Jonson, Sir Henry Wotton, Izaak Walton, John Donne, Robert Herrick, Richard Lovelace, Sir John Davenant and Lord Clarendon. However, he bequeathed his son an estate heavily encumbered by debt. Cotton did not attend Oxford nor Cambridge, but he was privately tutored. A cultured young gentleman, Cotton travelled to France and probably journeyed around Europe to complete his studies. Upon his return he married his cousin Isabella Hutchinson on 30 June 1656. Cotton served as magistrate (from 1665) and revenue commissioner (1660) for Staffordshire and the adjoining Derbyshire. He also held a brief commission as an army captain in 1667. Even so, Cotton was short of money and had to request parliamentary approval for the sale of his lands on several occasions. Most of Cotton's works were published prior to the Restoration. The first was an elegy on Lord Hastings, *Lacrymae musarum* (1649). He may have been the "C. C." who signed the English translation of Hobbes's *De cive* in 1650. By 1653 two of his love lyrics had been set by Coleman and published in Playford's *Select Musicall Ayres and Dialogues*. In 1664 he published *Morall Philosophy of the Stoicks*, translated from the French. During Charles II's reign Cotton wrote his most successful work in commercial terms, *Scarronnides*, a scatological burlesque of Virgil's narrative of Dido and Aeneas. The first book was issued in 1664 and book 4 the following year. The work was highly demanded: there



were thirteen further editions of the two books combined between 1667 and 1807. Cotton's *Horace* was published on 30 May 1671 (Arber 1: 72), perhaps out of economic necessity, for the dedication was dated 7 November 1665 (A2v).

The identity of Mary Howe, the dedicatee of Wharton's *Love's Martyr* (MS c. 1685), remains obscure. According to Clark, she was probably Mary Howe Soames, the daughter of Sir Gabriel Howe of Wotton under Edge, Gloucestershire; this Mary Howe became the second wife of Sir William Soames, King James II's ambassador to Turkey (*Goodwin Wharton* 352n5). Sir William passed away in Malta on his way to Turkey on 12 June 1686 (HMC, *Downshire*, 1:196, 226). Mary returned to London and took a house on Pall Mall, although she left for Paris on 15 December the following year and died there some time before 15 February 1688 (Clark, *Goodwin Wharton* 352n5). However, Greer and Hastings suggest that she could have been the daughter of Sir Richard Grubham Howe, who married Lady Rochester's sister and witnessed Mrs. Wharton's marriage contract in 1673 (352).

The author of the epistle, Anne Wharton (1659-1685), was born at Ditchley Park, Oxfordshire. Her father was Sir Henry Lee of Ditchley and her mother Anne Danvers, daughter of the regicide Sir John Danvers. Her parents died both within days of her birth and therefore she and her elder sister Eleanor became coparcenary heirs to the vast wealth of Henry Danvers, earl of Danby, which had been left to their mother (Greer). Both girls were placed under the guardianship of their grandmother Anne St John Lee Wilmot, dowager countess of Rochester. When the countess was appointed groom of the stole to Anne Hyde, duchess of York, the Lee girls probably accompanied their grandmother to the court of St James's and most probably acted as playmates to the royal princesses. Young Anne must have been present on the many occasions when the countess entertained the Yorks in her apartments (Greer and Hastings 20). By the time she was twelve years old, and against the wishes of her uncle, the earl of Rochester, the countess was already looking for a suitable husband for Anne. In September 1673, she was privately married to Thomas Wharton, who was created for the purpose sole heir to his father, Philip, Baron Wharton (Greer). Anne brought as her dowry £10,000 and £2,000 a year. However, her husband's lack of interest in his young wife soon became common knowledge, for he seemed to divide his time between

Parliament and the race tracks (Greer and Hastings 43). In March 1681, after several episodes of acute illness, Anne travelled to Paris for medical treatment, but before it could be completed, her husband required her to return to England (Greer). In the summer of 1685, she became severely ill again and died in late October.

In her lifetime, Anne Wharton enjoyed considerable reputation. Her poems were much sought for printed collections, and some were included in the family anthology entitled *Whartonianana* (1727). She composed verse paraphrases of the Lamentations of Jeremiah and Isaiah 53, an elegy on the earl of Rochester (which shows her deep attachment to him, and was praised by John Grubham Howe and Edmund Waller), more than twenty poems and a paraphrase of one of Ovid's *Heroides*. Her only play extant is the tragedy *Love's Martyr*, which survives in a manuscript held at the British Library (Add. MS 28693). The volume bears the autograph "Mary Howe" on the flyleaf, proving that this copy was presented to her friend, together with the dedicatory letter. Anne's interest in the theatre is demonstrated by her involvement in the project to stage Rochester's *Valentinian*, which was acted by the United Company in February 1684.

The identity of the dedicatee of Behn's *The Widdow Ranter* (1690) is likewise problematic. Todd suggests that Madam Welldon might be either Eliza or Gloriana, the two unknown friends that accompanied Behn to take the waters in Tunbridge Wells in the autumn of 1687 (*Secret Life* 383). In her critical edition of the play, Todd identifies two Madam Welldon or Weldon in London: Catherine Weldon, née Mantell, of Carleton Street, who married James in 1675; and Margaret Weldon, née Walker, formerly of Bushey in Hertfordshire (451). Behn's play was produced posthumously in late November 1689 (Van Lennep 377), with a prologue and epilogue by John Dryden. The dedication, which was said to be desired by the playwright, was signed by "G.J." This was almost certainly George Jenkins, who had the work published by James Knapton (Todd, *Secret Life* 379, 503n18).<sup>6</sup> Jenkins acknowledges the failure of the play, attributing it chiefly to bad staging. He mentions the "false caste" and the omission of

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<sup>6</sup> Jenkins had contributed two commendatory poems to Behn's translation of Bonnacorse's *La Montre* (1686). He praised Behn claiming that she had made a writer out of the French author, who had little merit before she softened his 'Rubbish' (Todd, *Secret Life* 379).

two scenes in the production, one of which he also excluded from the published version (Behn, A2-A2v).<sup>7</sup> The dedication was only included in the quarto of 1690.

The dedicatee of Pix's *Queen Catharine* (1698), Mrs. Cook of Norfolk, belonged to the Cary family and was related to the famous jurist and parliamentarian Sir Edward Coke. The genealogy is unclear but she might have been Mrs. Marie Coke, the wife of Sir Edward Coke, the only son and heir of Robert Coke, who inherited Sir Edward's estate at Holkham, Norfolk (Kelley, *Women Playwrights* 285n1). Although Pix did not achieve the popularity of other professional playwrights, she gained moderate success. *Ibrahim, the Thirteen Emperour of the Turks* and *The Spanish Wives*, both produced by Rich's Company in 1696, had proved popular, being revived well into the eighteenth century. The following year Pix wrote two other plays, *The Innocent Mistress* and *The Deceiver Deceived*, which were staged by Betterton's Company; the first was "a diverting Play" and "met with good Success" (Gildon 3), whereas the second was originally given to Rich, but was withdrawn (Van Lennep 489). *Queen Catharine*, a historical tragedy based on the fate of Henry V's widow in the War of the Roses, was staged by Betterton's Company sometime in June 1698 (Van Lennep 496-497).

Trotter's dedicatee for her tragedy *Love at a Loss* (1701), Sarah Piers (d. 1719) was the daughter of Matthew Roydon of Roydon in West Yorkshire. Her mother may have been the Martha Allen who married a Matthew Roydon on or about 22 August 1666 (H. F. Nelson). According to Colepeper, Sarah married Sir George Piers, Baronet, about 1694 ("Adversaria," Brownbill 211). Piers acted as an early patron of Trotter, supporting her entrance into the stage world. Trotter was a frequent guest at Lady Sarah's home in Kent, as confirmed by Lady Piers's correspondence (Birch). Piers herself was also a poet, literary critic and political commentator. She contributed two commendatory poems, "To my much esteemed Friend, On her Play called *Fatal Friendship*" (1698) and "To the excellent Mrs Catharine Trotter," for *The Unhappy Penitent*, published in 1701 (Birch xiv). Piers collaborated with Trotter, Pix, Manley

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<sup>7</sup> A clear example of mismatched casting was the appearance of Samuel Sandford in the role of Dareing, the soldier loved by Widow Ranter. As Cibber pointed out, Sandford usually played villains: "having a low and crooked Person, such bodily Defects were too strong to be admitted into great, or amiable Characters" (Cibber 78).

and others in a commemorative publication for John Dryden, entitled *The Nine Muses* (1700). Trotter's *Love at a Loss* (1701) was acted at the Drury Lane Theatre on 23 November 1700 and Princess Anne presumably attended either the first or the second performance (Milhous and Hume, *London Stage* 11).

## Dedications

The dedicatory epistles in this group present similar topics and motives to the ones in the other categories. The praise of the dedicatee constitutes an important element in these texts, although their divinisation is infrequent. In fact, authors generally adopt a humble tone, but do not magnify their panegyric because the ladies are not widely known. On the contrary, they do emphasise the request for protection.

The only exceptions to the toning down of the panegyric are Trotter's dedication to *Love at a Loss* (1701) and Pix's to *Queen Catharine* (1698), in which they lavishly praise their dedicatees. For instance, Trotter extols the character and taste of Sarah Piers:

Such an universal Complaisance of Temper I never yet met with in a Person, so capable, of so distinguishing a Genius as your Ladyship, and have often observ'd with wonder, that a Lady that knows how to relish the noblest things, and has the finest Entertainment in her self, can appear delighted with the most trivial Amusement in condescension to the Capacity of others. (n.p.)

The playwright places the emphasis on their friendship and presents her dedicatee as being respected and admired by others, implicitly referring to her virtues:

'Tis this has secur'd you more than others, of a distinguish'd Merit, from that Malice and Envy which usually pursues the most deserving; and you must permit me, Madam, to insist on this alone of all your shining Vertues; I have reason to value that most to which alone I owe the greatest Blessing of my Fate, the share you are pleas'd to allow me in your Friendship. (n.p.)

In the epistle to *Queen Catharine* (1698), Pix compliments Mrs. Cook of Norfolk similarly praising her taste and judgement and scorns the negative comments of critics, expecting that the name of the dedicatee will defend her from detractors:

Did not some of the brightest and best our Sex can boast of Encourage Attempts of this kind, the snarling Cynicks might prevail and cry down a diversion, which they themselves participate, though their ill Nature makes them grumble at their Entertainment, but when they shall see this Glorious name in the Front, when they shall know a Lady belov'd by Heaven and Earth, Mistress of all Perfections, the bounteous Powers give, or human nature is Capable to receive; when, I say they understand you protect, and like Innocent Plays, they must Acquiesce and be forc't to own so much goodness, cannot choose amiss. (A2)

Pix depicts the dedicatee as being deeply respected and possessing many virtues. The playwright continues the panegyric by resorting to the topos of the heroine to praise the dedicatee's lineage, again insisting on her character:

Queen Catharine, who tasted the Vicissitudes of Fate, will now forget her sufferings, and under such a Noble Patroness remain fixt in lasting Glory; and if my weak Pen has fail'd in the Character of that Great Princess: now I've made her an ample recompense, for where cou'd I have found a Lady of a more illustrious descent, or more Celebrated for her Vertues? (A2)

Pix extols "the name of Cary" which "Graces all our English Chronicles and is adorn'd with the greatest Honours," alluding to the literary resonances of the lady's family.<sup>8</sup> She praises the dedicatee and stresses her singularity: "that Noble stock did ne'er produce a lovelier branch than your fair self" (A2).

Flecknoe employs the topos of the heroine in the dedication of *Erminia* (1661), attributing his inspiration to Marta Southcot: "I Profess to all the world, that *Erminia* is more yours then mine. From you I took the pattern of the Plot; from you the spirit of writing it" (A2). The author praises his dedicatee for her beauty and virtuous character: since she does not possess a higher title, he introduces her as "the Fair and Vertuous Lady, the Lady Southcot" (A2) and establishes a connection between the patroness and the heroine by using the same adjectives to refer to "the Fair and Vertuous

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<sup>8</sup> Lucius Cary (1609-1643) had been celebrated in Ben Jonson's "Cary-Morison Ode" (1629), as well as his mother, Elizabeth Cary, Viscountess Falkland, poet, translator, and dramatist, best known for being the first woman to author a play: *The Tragedy of Mariam, the Fair Queen of Jewry* (1613). Viscountess Falkland also supported authors, who recognised her literary abilities in the dedications that they addressed her, such as the miscellany *Englands Helicon, or, The Muses Harmony* (1614), *A Sixthe Booke to the Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* (1624), and *The Workes of Mr John Marston* (1633).

*Erminia*” (A2v). Since the dedicatee’s circle of influence was limited and readers would not necessarily recognise her, the panegyric is brief and undetailed. Flecknoe only stresses the traits of her character that are relevant to the play (her beauty and virtuous morals), and to the lady’s own role as a patroness: her generosity.

The way in which Boothby addresses her dedicatee in the epistle to *Marcellia* (1670) likewise bears witness to the local scope of the lady’s prominence: “To the Honourable and most Accomplished Lady Yate, of Harvington in Worcestershire” (A2). Boothby extols Mary Yate referring to all her “Perfections and Virtues” and combines her praise with a request for protection, characterising her patroness as a benevolent and widely admired lady: “your generous and noble Humour . . . makes the World your Admirers, and fixes unalterably to the power of your Commands” (A2v).

In the epistle to *The English Rogue* (1668), the panegyric of the dedicatee is not foremost, given the lack of social prominence of Mrs. Alice Barret. Thompson refers to this lady as his “worthily honoured friend and Patroness” and praises her as being generous and noble when requesting her protection for his work: “To be plain; I have cast it at your Door, neither better nor worse to expect its fate: yet with some confidence of a favourable reception, since your Generosity and Nobleness were ever wont to correspond with Charity” (n.p.).

Cotton, in the epistle to *Horace* (1671), implicitly praises Mrs. Stanhope Hutchinson when he belittles his translation, claiming that his offering is inadequate for her: “it had never been design’d for you, who deserve much better than the best endeavour of a more happy Translator than I pretend to be” (A2). He continues by stressing the superiority of her name and excuses himself arguing that he is honouring a promise:

I do yet retain such a respect for you, as would defend your name from so mean a Dedication as this; did I not find my self oblig’d by a vain and imprudent promise to present you what I might have foreseen would at the best prove very unfit to kiss your hands, who ever entertain your self with the best things, and in that discover the best judgment to choose them. (A2)

Moreover, the author explains that his work was not intended for the stage, which will at least compensate for its faults, since it will not be exposed publicly: “However seeing I have made you a promise of this Play, that I want the Art or the Patience to mend it, and that you are only to suffer a private injury, since it is never to be made publick” (A2-A2v). In doing so, he characterises himself as the gentleman writer who mainly translates plays for coterie readers.

In the dedication to *Love’s Martyr* (c. 1685), Anne Wharton sincerely praises Mary Howe and stresses their friendship, claiming that she “makes the happynesse” of her life (f. 1v). The relationship between playwright and dedicatee is also underlined in the epistle to *The Widdow Ranter* (1690). George Jenkins introduces the praise of Madam Welldon explaining that Behn had intended to dedicate one of her works to her: “Knowing Mrs. Behn in her Life-time design’d to Dedicate some of her Works to you, you have a Naturall Title, and claim to this and I could not without being unjust to her Memory, but fix your name to it” (292). He compliments the dedicatee for her superior intellect, her goodness, affability and generosity, portraying her as a benevolent patroness:

[you] have not only a Wit above that, of most of your Sex; but a goodness and Affability Extreamly Charming, and Engaging beyond Measure, and perhaps there are few to be found like you, that are so Eminent for Hospitallity, and a Ready and Generous Assistance to the distress’d and Indigent, which are Qualities that carry much more of Divinity with them, then a Puritanicall outward Zeal for Virtue and Religion. (292)

When requesting her acceptance of the play, he praises her again, underscoring her judgement and compassion, which also justify the offering: “Your Wit and Judgment being to be Submitted to in all Cases; Besides your Natural Tenderness and Compassion for the Unfortunate, gives you in a manner another Title to it: The preference which is due to you upon so many Accounts is therefore the Reason of this present Address” (293).

Another relevant theme in these dedications is the depiction of the dedicatee and her husband as an example of conjugal love, a topos introduced in Pix’s and Trotter’s epistles. The insistence on these marital examples in plays which were published after

the Jeremy Collier controversy was certainly aimed at defending drama as an exemplary genre, which provides the audience with positive models of behaviour, as opposed to the sex comedies of the 1670s. In the epistle to *Queen Catharine* (1698) Pix praises Mrs. Cook's husband and portrays them as the embodiment of marital felicity, before expressing her best wishes for their offspring:

If Heaven Correspondent to our wishes, design'd you its peculiar blessings, you are given to a Gentleman, of whom we may venture to say, he merits even you? Oh! may you appear many, many succeeding years, the bright Examples of Conjugal Affection, and shame that bare-fac'd Vice out of Countenance, which breaks the Marriage Vows without a blush: May you still remain blest in each other, pleas'd to see your Beauties and your Vertues renewed in your Charming Race, whilst the admiring World shall wonder at your happiness, and reform in hopes to obtain some of those blessings. (A2)

Similarly, in the epistle to *Love at a Loss* (1701), Trotter praises Lady Piers's husband, Sir George Piers, extolling his character and portraying them as a loving couple:

You . . . have the highest sense of your Happiness in Sir George Piers, who is indeed a living Instruction of the Moral in the last Verses of this Comedy;<sup>9</sup> and so well recommends his own Worth by his Respect and Value for you, and (in an Age when Wives are scarce look'd on but as the impediments of a Man's Pleasure, or at best a Convenience in the settling his Affairs, without aiming at a Satisfaction in her self) has found his Felicity, in making yours. (n.p.)

Flecknoe's dedication is written in the manner of a private epistle thanking Lady Southcot for her hospitality at Mestham, Surrey. The praise of the country house leads to the divinisation of the dedicatee. The playwright depicts Mestham as an isolated temple where he can find the necessary peace and quietness to write:

nor am I ever more Poet, then when I am with you at Mestham. There, free from the Distractions of the Town, my minde is recollected: there, 'tis at Repose, free from trouble and molestation: and there 'tis chear'd

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<sup>9</sup> *Love at a Loss* finishes with a speech by the reformed rake Beaumine, recanting his past behaviour and professing to love and honour his bride. He rounds it off with verses in which respect for wives is presented as central to the dignity of gentlemen: For treating them with rudeness, or neglect, / Does most dishonour, on our selves reflect; / . . . And as in chusing, we their worth approve, / We tax our Judgment, when we cease to love. (56)



and delighted, with chearful and delightsom company. Your green Walks are my Parnassus; the Spring or Fountain-head, my Helicon. (A2-A2v)

Furthermore, the epistle is meant to compensate for his failure to bring his work to the stage. In the preface, Flecknoe pretends not to be interested in having the play performed, for this was the only strategy left after the work had been rejected by both companies: “I cod not promise you it shud be Acted, (for having no interest in the Stage, I leave that to those who have;) you may think it a preposterous way to Print it before it be Acted; but Printing it as I do, (to pass to private hands, not to the publick) may no more prejudice it, then the first dayes Acting do’s the second; which if good, commends it but the more” (A3). The way in which he stigmatizes professional staging emulates the pose generally adopted by genteel dramatists. In fact, in the Preface, Flecknoe boasts of his literary culture, citing foreign poets such as the French Pierre de Ronsard and the Spanish Lope de Vega:

I hope it may no wayes prejudice it in opinion, to have him for Author who may say without vanity, that none knows more of the English Stage then he, nor has seen more of the Latine, French, Spanish and Italian; nor may it prejudice him to be the Authour of it, (whatsoever the ignorant and envious say) of the same Profession with Petre Ronsard in France; Lopes de Vega in Spain; and the best and famousest Poets in Italy. (A3v)

In the dedication to *Marcellia* (1670), while requesting Mary Yate’s protection, Boothby adopts a deferential attitude, presenting herself as in need of protection and portraying the dedicatee as an influential benefactress: “Since the most weak, ought to endeavour the most powerful Defenders; I could no where elect a person whose Accomplishments renders them so capable to that requisite, as your Ladyship: Which Motive I onely have to hope and plead my Pardon by, for my Presumption in imploring your Protection” (A2). The playwright stresses the superiority of the dedicatee, belittling her offering and, by implication, divinising the lady: “Sinners look not upon their own weak merits, but Heavens Bounty, when they implore Benefits: For if they should turn their Eyes to their inward View, and regulate their Petitions by their Deservings; they would blush and grow dumb to all Requests” (A2v). While begging her to excuse the errors in the play, Boothby anticipates potential criticism and insists on the necessity of protection for her work, due to her condition as a woman: “since it

not only requires your unequal'd Eloquence and Wisdom, to appose the Censuring world, upon this uncommon action in my Sex: but your Goodness to pardon the many and high defects, which you will there find to condemn" (A2v). Being the first woman playwright whose work had been professionally staged, Boothby needs to present herself to her readers as humble and modest.

Cotton underlines his dedicatee's generosity and affability as he offers his work. Even though he did not intend it for the stage, he claims that her protection will benefit him, which shows that this was a conventional theme:

Let me beg of you to accept it, with the same sweetness you usually entertain the applications of other your Friends and Servants, who admire and love you: by which acceptance (besides the honour and obligation you will multiply upon me) you will do a great justice to your self, in being favourable to a man, that (if he could write equal to the best) would lay his labours at your feet with the same humility, and affection. (A2v)

In *Love's Martyr* (c. 1685), Wharton expresses her gratitude to Mary Howe for accepting the dedication and belittles her offering, pointing out that she never meant to stage or otherwise publish her work: "Forgive me for offering to you a Play w<sup>ch</sup> never deserved nor was ever designed to be publick and therefore this cannot aspire to the name of a dedication, could it, I should be ashamed of it (since they are so common & of late so full of falsehood & flattery) though this be full of truth to you" (f.1v). Wharton conceives the dedication to Mary Howe as a sincere offering and therefore she despises the conventional eulogistic language that is typical of the genre (f.1v). Again, she highlights her personal relationship with the dedicatee and attributes the value of her work to the fact that it was commanded by her friend: "[it] deserves not the name of a Poem but that you commanded it and whatever faults are caused by my zeal to obey your commands you ought to forgive or at least to over look" (f.1v).

Pix and Trotter also belittle their work, using the topos of the trifle. In the dedication to *Queen Catharine* (1701), Pix expresses her hope that her play will at least entertain her dedicatee, and requests her forgiveness with humility: "give me leave, Madam, to hope this trifle may find a vacant hour, when you will deign to peruse it, and be so good to forgive the Authors presumption in laying it at your feet" (A2-A2v). In

*Love at a Loss* (1701) Trotter claims that it was not her intention to write a comedy and that she composed this one with no expectation of success:

Madam, I have encourag'd my self to offer your Ladyship this Trifle, which I confess was once too little my Favourite to have design'd it such an Honour; I never thought of making any pretence to a Talent for Comedy, but writ this when the Town had been little pleas'd with Tragedy intire, mingled with one of mine, which since the tast is mended, appear'd alone; and this lay by me a considerable time, till Idleness reminded me of filling it up, thus it was piec'd with little Care or Concern for the success, not intending to establish my Fame upon it. (n.p.)

Resorting to the topos of the genteel writer, Trotter further notes that it was the encouragement of her friends that endeared the play to her and prompted her to print it, “to have it clear it self of the injurious Report it suffer'd under” (n.p.). She compliments the taste of her patroness as she voices her hope that the play's reception will ameliorate “by appearing in Print, and with the Protection of a Lady whose Character wou'd be its Vindication, and whose tast of Poetry made her a proper Patroness to things of this Nature” (n.p.). She humbly stresses the happiness that the dedicatee's acceptance of her play would bring her and expresses her admiration for her patroness:

Thus possess'd of all you can esteem as Solid good, you yet can condescend to let me be a part of your Satisfaction; I boast it Madam, indeed, but without vanity, as my good Fortune only; which tho' I may blush to think how partially bestow'd, is not less mine; and I confess my self so interested to rejoyce in your Foible, when so Advantagious for me, to wish you may always take for merit in me; the mighty value I have of your Kindness, with the fondness of my Heart for you. (n.p.)

George Jenkins employs himself in vindicating *The Widdow Ranter* (1690) in the epistle to Madam Welldon, arguing that Behn wanted her to protect it from critics, who have taken advantage of the fact that the playwright cannot defend herself. He now entrusts this task to the dedicatee:

Our Author, Madam, who was so true a Judge of Wit, was (no doubt of it) satisfyed in the Patroness she had pitcht upon: If ever she had occasion for a Wit and Sense like yours 'tis now, to Defend this (one of the last of her Works) from the Malice of her Enemies, and the ill Nature

of the Critticks, who have had Ingratitude enough not to Consider the Obligations they had to her when Living. (292)

Jenkins owns that “the Play had not that Success which it deserv’d, and was expected by her Friends” (292), and explains that the reason for this was the cutting of some scenes, a circumstance which would have appalled Behn herself: “Had our Authour been alive she would have Committed it to the Flames rather than have suffer’d it to have been Acted with such Omissions as was made, and on which the Foundation of the Play Depended” (292). Still, Jenkins hopes that the dedicatee “will find an hours diversion in the reading, and will meet with not only Wit, but true Comedy” (292-293). Having explained the circumstances of its production, Jenkins again appeals to the dedicatee to protect the play from censure; “I thought your Protection, could be so usefull to none, as to this, whose owning it may Silence the Malice of its Enemies” (Behn 293).

In the dedication to *Queen Catharine* (1701), Pix refers to her play as a trifle, which she hopes will at least entertain her dedicatee, and requests her forgiveness with humility: “give me leave, Madam, to hope this trifle may find a vacant hour, when you will deign to peruse it, and be so good to forgive the Authors presumption in laying it at your feet” (A2-A2v).

The dedication to *The English Rogue* (1668) differs from the other epistles because Thompson openly exhibits his ambition and addresses Alice Barret with a certain disregard of conventions, exercising his “priviledge” by offering his work to her. He pleasantly begins the epistle by discussing the practice of dedicatory writing and resorting to the topos of the offspring: “Madam, So many have already assum’d it as a priviledge, that it is now become a current custom to prefix a dedication to some one whose judgement and ingenuity may both grace the ambitious Author, and protect his weakness, otherwise you had escap’d the trouble of being Guardian to this Brat, whose Parent was unable to maintain it” (n.p.). He requests her forgiveness for his presumption and thanks her for her kindness in a humble tone: “I beg your pardon for this offence, but cannot promise to do so no more. However I submit to your worthy self, whose intimate goodness and serenity have hitherto so far obleiged me” (n.p.).

These epistles, being addressed to women whose social prominence was at best moderate, are marked by a minimal use of the panegyric, except for the dedications to *Queen Catharine* (1698) and *Love at a Loss* (1701). The texts do exhibit topoi and themes similar to the ones in the other categories. Furthermore, authors adopt the conventional humble stance when addressing their patroness to offer their praise and request their protection.

## 7.2 Parodic dedications

Two dedications are characterised by a certain parody of the conventions of dedicatory writing. The texts in question were addressed to commoners and appeared in plays published during King Charles’s reign. The following table summarises the information pertaining these epistles.

Table 8: Parodic dedications

Dedicator, play	Dedicatee
Belon (?), <i>The Mock-Duellist</i> (1675)	Madam S. C.
Wycherley, <i>The Plain-Dealer</i> (1677)	Lady B.

### Dedicatees and dedicators

There is scarce biographical information concerning the two dedicatees in this category. The identity of “Madam S. C.” remains a mystery, although she might be French, given the manner in which she is addressed. Madam S.C. was offered *The Mock-Duellist* (1675), a play which was attributed to Peter Belon by Langbaine, based on the initials on the title-page (517). That this epistle may be parodic is suggested by the implicit contrast between the emphasis on the dedicatee’s virtue in the address —“To the vertuous accomplished Lady”—and her alleged familiarity with the *beau monde* at a time (the mid-1670s) when these fashionable circles were associated with markedly libertine mores. Belon (fl. 1665-1684), who might have French origins himself, had translated Le Fèvre’s *A Discourse upon Sir Walter Rawleigh’s Great*

*Cordial* (1664).<sup>10</sup> His comedy, *The Mock-Duellist* (1675) was acted by the King's Company, probably in May 1675, for it was licensed on 27 May, although Van Lennep argues that it might have been premiered before that since "the known performances for Drury Lane in May do not provide much opportunity for another play" (232).

Wycherley's dedicatee for *The Plain-Dealer* (1677), whom he addresses as "My Lady B," has been identified as Mother Bennet, a notorious procuress. She must have been very well-known, for authors frequently referred to her in their works as the bawd par excellence. Dryden, for instance, mentioned her in *Sir Martin Marr-All* (IV, I, 256). *The Plain-Dealer* (1677), Wycherley's last comedy, was premiered on 11 December 1676 by the King's Company (Van Lennep 253). The play was written in an answer to the women critics of his previous work, *The Country-Wife* (1675). *The Plain-Dealer* was so complex and radical that the audience did not know what to make of it, and it had to be saved by the playwright's powerful friends: Buckingham, Rochester, Dorset, Mulgrave, Savile and others (Dennis 277). This play came to be considered "the best Comedy that ever was Compos'd in any Language. The only Fault that has been found in it, is its being too full of *Wit*; a Fault which few Authors can be guilty of" (Boyer 217). The dedication to Mother Bennet is a parody of his earlier dedication of *Love in a Wood* (1672) to the duchess of Cleveland. Wycherley playfully signs the epistle as the Plain Dealer, in an interplay of author and character. In fact, the playwright would sometimes use this pseudonym in his correspondence.

## Dedications

Like the dedications addressed to gentlewomen, these epistles are characterised by minimal praise of the dedicatees, except in parodic form. Precisely because of this

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<sup>10</sup> In the following years Belon published more translations from the French: Arnauld's *The King-Killing Doctrine of the Jesuites* (1679), which he dedicated to George Villiers, duke of Buckingham; the first and the second part of Brémond's *The Pilgrim* (1680-1681) and his *Gallant Memoirs* (1681); Préchac's *The Princesse of Fess* (1682), which he offered to Frances Stuart, duchess of Richmond; as well as a medical treatise, Monginot's *A New Mystery in Physick Discovered, by Curing of Fevers & Agues by Quinquina or Jesuits Powder* (1681). Belon had scientific interests, for he also wrote *The Irish Spaw, Being a Short Discourse on Mineral Waters in General* (1684).

parodic intention, the tone employed is less deferential and more playful than in conventional epistles.

Belon praises his dedicatee addressing her as “the Vertuous Accomplished Lady, Madam S.C.” (A2) and highlights her generosity. Moreover, he argues that she is the only one who can protect him from critics, given her “perfect knowledge of people of fashion”:

I know, Madam, that to have shrowded under your generous protection all that the greatest Gallantry of the two most Polite Nations of the world could have wound up to the highest sublimity of Wit, had worn some face of Justice, which might have rendred the presumption excusable; it being so generally known, that none with more reason than your self, could undertake the Censure of what is so much your own; I mean *La parfaite cognoissance du beau Monde.*” (A3)

Belon employs the topos of the hero to playfully request his dedicatee’s protection, imitating the language of wit and humbly pleading with her to favour him: “The French Vallet, according to his natural Insolence, throws himself at your feet; not in his broken English, with a Begar Madam, *mee voul ave it de so*, but in that Dialect used by the most refin’d Wits, *Vous supplye tres humblement Le regarder d’un aspect favorable*” (A3). The playwright stresses the need of the dedicatee’s protection at a time marked by strong rivalry among the poets: “Which blessing he vows is a sufficient safeguard against those three Fatalities of Books; Envy, Spight, and Malice” (A3). He goes on to acknowledge his presumption and request her forgiveness, while praising her goodness and superiority through the topos of lustre: “Champagne’s Crime can plead no excuse; and being beyond the reach of ordinary Clemencie, can have no other hopes, than in that goodness which shines with so much Lustre throughout all your actions” (A3v).

Wycherley’s dedication of *The Plain-Dealer* (1677) to Mother Bennet differs from the previous texts in its deeply cynical humour. Even though it retains the structure of a dedicatory epistle and features its chief elements (praise of the dedicatee, request for patronage, expressions of gratitude and apologies), the author introduces numerous digressions concerning his comedy, the female audience and the profession of letters. Moreover, as Jessica Munns has noted, the epistle is marked throughout by

sexual innuendo and misogyny, as well as an identification of writing and prostitution (“Aphra Benh’s Foreplay” 57). Pointing out that the work had been severely censured by women of quality, the playwright requests her protection, while he portrays himself as a rejected lover who seeks instead the consolation of a whorehouse: “this Play claims naturally your Protection, since it has lost its Reputation with the Ladies of stricter lives in the Play-house; and (you know) when mens endeavours are discountenanc’d and refus’d, by the nice coy Women of Honour, they come to you” (365). Therefore, besides denouncing female hypocrisy, he implies that protection and honour can be bought in the same way as sexual favours. He claims, however, that he is unacquainted with his dedicatee and has not yet had the honour of a “Favour,” and uses this to underline the mercenary nature of the relationship between client and patron: “by most Dedications it appears, that Authors, though they praise their Patrons from top to toe, and seem to turn ’em inside out, know ’em as little, as sometimes their Patrons their Books, tho they read ’em out” (365).

By equating writers to prostitutes, Wycherley places himself on the margins of society, where his dedicatee naturally belongs. The author can take this license because dedications to less elevated figures allow for more wit and free play than those addressed to high members of the nobility (Munns, “Aphra Benh’s Foreplay” 50). Hiding behind the curtain of irony, the playwright makes assertions which would normally be curtailed by decorum. He introduces the epistle by referring to the power of poets to immortalise the dedicatees in their works although, since Mrs Bennet is not a person of honour, she has not received this sort of addresses: “But you, Madam, without the help of a Poet, have made your self known and famous in the World; and, because you do not want it, are therefore most worthy of an Epistle Dedicatory” (365). In saying so, he is also alluding to the alleged debauchery of society and its hypocrisy: bawds are more famous than people of honour, even though they are despised, just like part of the audience rejects sex comedies, but still enjoys their titillating humour. The author praises his dedicatee, addressing her as an aristocratic lady and extolling her judgment, which is obviously sharp in the subject his play has been accused of:

To you the Great and Noble Patroness of rejected and bashful men, of which number I profess my self to be one, though a Poet, a Dedicating



Poet; To you I say, Madam, who have as discerning a judgment, in what's obscene or not, as any quick-sighted civil Person of 'em all, and can make as much of a double meaning saying as the best of 'em; yet wou'd not, as some do, make nonsense of a Poet's jest, rather than not make it bawdy. (365-366)

Wycherley contends that authors cannot be held responsible for the obscene interpretations of their work, since it is the spectator who constructs such readings: "In short, Madam, you wou'd not be one of those who ravish a Poet's innocent words, and make 'em guilty of their own naughtiness (as 'tis term'd) in spite of his teeth" (366). Then, he introduces a misogynist digression, portraying wives as unfaithful and even condoning rape, for, in his view, women feign to be victims in order to avoid revealing that they have abandoned themselves to their desires:

Nay, nothing is secure from the power of their imaginations; no, not their Husbands, whom they Cuckold with themselves, by thinking of other men, and so make the lawful matrimonial embraces Adultery; wrong Husbands and Poets in thought and word, to keep their own Reputations. But your Ladyship's justice, I know, wou'd think a Woman's Arraigning and Damning a Poet for her own obscenity, like her crying out a Rape, and hanging a man for giving her pleasure, only that she might be thought not to consent to't; and so to vindicate her honour forfeits her modesty. (366)

The playwright derisively observes that spectators have selected his comedy as "the only Touchstone of Womens Vertue and Modesty" (366), and complains that women would be more inclined to read the play in private than attend a public performance in order to preserve their reputation. He suggests that what female spectators truly abhor is the openness and sincerity of the comedy, because it makes them feel exposed: "Some there are who say, 'Tis the Plain-dealing of the Play, not the obscenity; 'tis taking off the Ladies Masks, not offering at their Pettycoats, which offends 'em" (367). He emphasises female hypocrisy by referring to modesty as a mask "which Women wear promiscuously in publick" and builds on this to establish a bond with the dedicatee. Both profit from immorality: "for a Comic Poet, and a Lady of your Profession . . . the Vices of the Age are our best business" (368).

After this digression on the morality of his comedy, Wycherley mocks the rhetoric of dedications, presenting Mother Bennet as a gracious, generous patroness, and conducts an exercise in paradoxical encomium, extolling the advantages of prostitution while contemptuously scorning marriage:<sup>11</sup>

[you] are, of all publick-spirited people, the most necessary, most communicative, most generous and hospitable. . . . The good you have done is unspeakable; How many young unexperienc'd Heirs have you kept from rash foolish Marriages? and from being jilted for their lives by the worst sort of Jilts, Wives? How many unbewitched Widowers Children have you preserv'd from the Tyranny of Stepmothers? How many old Dotards from Cuckoldage, and keeping other mens Wenches and Children? How many Adulteries and unnatural sins have you prevented? (368-369)

He also presents his dedicatee, in mock-conventional fashion, as “a true encourager of Poetry,” arguing that “Love is a better help to it than Wine; and Poets, like Painters, draw better after the Life, than by Fancy” (370). He resorts to the topos of the poor poet—“poor Poets can get no favour in the Tiring Rooms, for they are no Keepers”—and comically claims an interest in the lady’s business, again equating playhouse and brothel: “a poet ought to be as free of your houses as of the playhouses, since he contributes to the support of both” (370).

The epistle concludes reiterating the panegyric of the dedicatee (“your Vertues deserve a Poem rather than an Epistle, or a Volume intire to give the World your Memoirs,” 371) and the condemnation of hypocrisy, “that heinous, and worst of Womens Crimes” (371). By repeatedly condemning the false mask of modesty and praising a bawd, Wycherley devaluates honour and exposes the double standards of society and their affected prudery. The various comparisons that he establishes between playwriting and prostitution serve as a denunciation of the precariousness of his profession, as well as an open statement of his intention: to lash at the vices in society.

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<sup>11</sup> Henry Knight Miller has defined paradoxical encomium as “a species of rhetorical jest or display piece which involves the praise of unworthy, unexpected, or trifling objects” (145). This tradition can be traced back to Greek rhetoricians such as Gorgias and Isocrates, and one of its most influential examples was Erasmus’s *Praise of Folly* (1511). Miller lists examples of paradoxical encomia dating from the second half of the seventeenth century (174-175)..

Wycherley's dedication to Mother Bennet is exceptional among those addressed to women beneath the ranks of the peerage. It is the only epistle in which the panegyric is developed at length, though praise is clearly ironic. This text is conceived as a response to the criticism levelled at the alleged immorality of the play, which Wycherley attributes to the hypocrisy of spectators, especially female. Therefore, the epistle shares some of the characteristics of the preface, such as the discussion of the work and the resort to digressions. The failure of this comedy left the author with little social capital to invest in a dedication, and Wycherley chose instead to parody the genre, seemingly following the conventions while subverting the essence of this practice.

## 8. Conclusions

The analysis of the dramatic dedications addressed to women during the reigns of the later Stuarts demonstrates that the system of patronage was still functioning in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Dedicatory epistles articulate client-patron relationships as expressions of the culture of the gift, since they are based on the exchange of symbolic capital, which was traded in for prestige, social renown and a position in the literary field. The system of patronage aided playwrights in building a career, as people who could exert influence in their favour accepted the present of their works, which contributed to the staging of their subsequent plays and acceptance by the companies and theatregoers. The fact that this practice was based on an exchange can be observed in the many examples which show that not only the authors (and occasionally impresarios or editors) benefitted from this long-established custom. Many of these ladies were offered works at critical points in their lives when their prestige was at a low ebb and a timely panegyric could be helpful to reinforce their social status.

The fact that a total of seventy-one plays were presented to forty-three different female addressees indicates that women were highly capable of securing effective patronage for playwrights. The duchess of Cleveland assisted Dryden at the beginning of his career and K  roualle commissioned a performance of Dryden's *The Indian Emperour*, which was acted by her own troupe. On some occasions dramatists were rewarded with appointments and offices: Otway was engaged as tutor to Eleanor Gwyn's son; Etherege entered the service of the Yorks and Wycherley was appointed captain-lieutenant of Buckingham's company through the influence of Cleveland. Furthermore, these ladies could introduce playwrights to other members of the court and enlarge their prestigious circle of acquaintances. Sometimes the influence of patronesses was also crucial in the development of dramatic fashions. Thus, in the early years of the eighteenth century a number of women were said to have promoted the introduction of Italian-style opera in England, which certainly helped this new form of entertainment become popular and enlarge audiences. The chief impresarios of the time, Heidegger, Swiny and Hill, together with librettists, dedicated or inscribed their

works to encouragers of the genre, such as Queen Anne, Juliana Boyle, Henrietta Godolphin, Anne Hamilton, Sarah Churchill, Elizabeth Montagu or Jemima Grey.

The patronesses of the Restoration stand out for their varied social origins, ranging from queens to country gentry. The largest group of dedicatees is formed by women pertaining to the aristocracy (thirty-five dedications), followed by the female members of the royal family, including in its extended form the wives of the king's illegitimate sons (seventeen epistles), Charles II's royal mistresses (eight dedications), gentlewomen (eight) and two parodic dedications. The ladies who received more than one play are Anne Stuart, Mary of Modena, Louise de K roualle, Anna Scott, Mary Butler, Juliana Boyle, Elizabeth Monck, and Henrietta Godolphin. Significantly, most of these ladies were addressed the epistles when they were experiencing a decline in popularity: for instance, Elizabeth Percy was offered a dedication right after the scandal surrounding the assassination of her husband; the duchess of York was never particularly well regarded; and the duchess of Portsmouth was the most contested of the royal mistresses and was dedicated works after the arrival of a rival who supplanted her in the monarch's affection: Hortense Mancini.

The reasons which determined the choice of a particular patroness are manifold: the reputation and symbolic capital of the dedicatee, her lineage and rank, but also biographical events, such as a marriage or the birth of an heir. Sometimes the playwright's singling out of a particular lady hides a political agenda. Authors often addressed their plays to the wives of influential courtiers and politicians in order to signal their political leanings, though in a less direct manner. For example, Dryden's dedication of *The State of Innocence* (1677), as well as Otway's of *The Orphan* (1680) to Mary of Modena were aimed at asserting their allegiance to the duke of York. Similarly, Otway's *Venice Preserv'd* (1682) was offered to Louise de K roualle as an acknowledgement of her involvement in the duke's return from exile. On the other hand, Whig playwrights dedicated their works to Mary Stuart (such as Cooke's *Love's Triumph*, which appeared shortly after her marriage to William of Orange), Anne Stuart (Banks's *The Unhappy Favourite*); Katherine Herbert (Banks's *The Rival Kings*), whose father had openly opposed the declaration of indulgence in 1672 and supported

the Test Act of 1673; or Katherine Manners (Banks's *The Destruction of Troy*), her husband, Lord Roos, being a Whig supporter during the Exclusion Crisis.

On other occasions, playwrights selected their dedicatees as a token of gratitude for the support and favours that they had received from them. This is the case of Dryden's dedication of *The Indian Emperour* (1667) to Anna Scott, who encouraged a court performance in which both the duchess and the duke participated, or Settle's *Ibrahim* (1677) to Elizabeth Monck, who had organised a private performance at New Hall. Authors also offered their plays with the intention of strengthening pre-existing relations of patronage and clientelage. For instance, Stapylton offered *The Slighted Maid* (1663) to the duke of Monmouth and later *The Tragedie of Hero and Leander* (1669) to the duchess, in the same way as Shadwell dedicated *The Humorists* (1671) to Margaret Cavendish and four other plays to her husband, the duke of Newcastle. In the epistle presenting *Calisto* (1675) to Mary Stuart, Crowne sought the patronage of the duke of York, expressing his hope of retaining the royal family's favour, and de La Roche-Guilhen praised the Lord Chamberlain in exchange for the commission of *Rare en tout* (1677), which he organised to honour his daughter, Isabella FitzRoy.

Dedications provide valuable information on the symbolic capital of dramatists and the strategies they resorted to in order to construct their social image as authors, which would allow them to occupy a favourable position within the field of literature and reap greater benefits. As we might expect, playwrights jumped at the occasion to dedicate plays which had accumulated a high amount of symbolic capital: Lee's *Theodosius* (1680), which had proved remarkably successful, was presented to the duchess of Richmond; D'Urfey's the first part of *The Comical History of Don Quixote* (1694), a play which was very well received, to the duchess of Ormond; Banks's *The Unhappy Favourite* (1682), which had King Charles and the queen attend one of the performances, and Congreve's *Mourning Bride* (1697), with an outstanding thirteen-night run, to Princess Anne. However, there is also a considerable number of examples of plays which had failed or had not even made it to the stage, but were nonetheless dedicated by their authors in an attempt to salvage what they could and reap some profit: Shadwell's *The Humorists* (1671) and Crowne's *The Ambitious Statesman* (1679) had unsuccessful premieres; Flecknoe's *Erminia* (1661), Medbourne's *St Cecily*

(1666) and Ecclestone's *Noah's Flood* (1679) were rejected by the companies, Banks's *Cyrus the Great* (1696) remained unperformed for fifteen years, Tuke's *The Souls Warfare* (1672) sold so badly that it was reissued as *The Divine Comedian* that same year; Bank's *The Island Queens* (1684) was banned from the stage by the Master of Revels and was only acted twenty years later in a revised form. Playwrights offered their works at different stages in their careers. In some cases, they preferred to address their first dedications to women (for example, Behn with *The Feign'd Curtizans*) or when the play in question had accumulated less symbolic capital than expected (like Shadwell in the dedication to *The Humorists*). Some dedicated their plays both to influential men and women as a means to boost their careers and gain renown, while others (Banks, for instance) appear to have had a preference for female dedicatees.

Given that dedications are always addressed to a social superior, dramatists typically exhibit a humble attitude, a characteristic strategy of the genre to emphasise the social difference between dramatists and patronesses, heighten the panegyric and justify the plea for patronage. Authors employ a variety of resources to belittle their works, request protection against critics, express regret for fear of a potential offence, as well as to stress the favours enjoyed and the support that their dedicatees have provided them with. This might range from reading a draft of the text or attending performances, to inviting the author to their residence or organising a private performance. These strategies were all aimed at displaying the symbolic capital of the work and strengthening the position of the author in the field of literature, as a means to build a successful and lasting career. However, playwrights who were well connected and were already in possession of a high amount of symbolic capital and being well connected, such as Sedley or Wycherley, could employ a different tone. These poets played the rakish gallant in their addresses, adopting the insouciant pose of a court wit and made a very limited use of the submissive tone. Others, like Duffett, imitated in part this nonchalant attitude, mocking some of the standards of dedications, for they had little to lose. The nature of these changes in behaviour depends on the authors' symbolic capital and their own estimation of it.

In general, most of the dramatists strove to vindicate their importance and the utility of their panegyrics with the purpose of dignifying the profession of letters. The

rhetoric of dedications features a variety of characteristic topoi and resources to praise the dedicatee and stress her superiority, while belittling the work and adopting a deferential and humble stance. The panegyric is articulated through a variety of themes, some of which are drawn from Neoplatonic literature and aim at divinising the patroness. Recurrent topoi are the imagery of radiance through the Neoplatonic motif of the eyes and their comparison to the Sun, the use of religious language and the language of warfare, which draws on the tradition of medieval courtly love, the comparison of the author to a painter, the impossibility of adequately depicting the patroness, and many others.

As might be expected, the tone of the panegyric is attuned to the rank of the patronesses. When addressing women ranking beneath the peerage playwrights tend not to overdo their praise, given their moderate social prominence. At least do not tend to employ strategies of divinisation. Instead, they comment on the instances of favour that they have received from these ladies, portraying them as generous patronesses. However, in the case of the higher-ranking ladies authors indulge in absolute expressions, superlatives and comparatives, to emphasise the dedicatee's beauty and natural grace, wit, virtue, judgment and other charms, together with her ancestry.

The insistence on the commendation of these patronesses' allure and lineage is meant to highlight the precious assets that they bring to their families, as well as the renown of their ancestors. Furthermore, the idealisation of the patroness is often accompanied by lavish praise of a male member of the family, who is commended for his military superiority and capability, courage, and service to the crown. This is particularly so in the dedications addressed to the nobility (for instance, those addressed to the duchess of Albemarle and the wife and daughters of the duke of Marlborough) or members of the royal family. The divinisation of the husband is conspicuous in the epistles offered to Princess Mary and Mary of Modena in the years of the Exclusion Crisis, and therefore had a political agenda. Nevertheless, in other cases allusions to the dedicatees' husbands were deliberately avoided, for fear of offending them, such as in some of the dedications addressed to the duchess of Monmouth after she became estranged from the duke. In the epistles offered to Queen Mary and Queen Anne, no



reference is made to King William or the Prince of Denmark, given the powerful position of the dedicatees as queens regnant.

The panegyric of the dedicatees also varied significantly throughout the reigns of the late Stuarts. Whereas in the Caroline period the ladies were praised pointing chiefly to their beauty and lineage, after the Glorious Revolution greater emphasis was placed on highlighting the patronesses' virtue and exemplariness. This strategy clearly runs parallel to the campaign for moral reformation promoted by William and Mary, and also seems to respond to the widespread anxiety provoked by the attacks on the profanity and impropriety of the stage in the 1690s. Authors insist on presenting their plays as following a moral purpose and compliment their patronesses for having a sensitive nature which allows them to appreciate tragedy. Moreover, some authors depict their dedicatees as examples of virtuous married wives, in order to demonstrate that their works set positive examples which these ladies approve of. This defence of their own work was particularly relevant after the Collier stage controversy in 1698 and the emergence of the Societies for the Reformation of Manners, which made practical attempts at censorship, forcing professional playwrights to be on their guard and to produce less offensive plays.

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**APPENDIX 1: DEDICATIONS ADDRESSED TO WOMEN**

Dedicatee	Dedicator, play
Martha Southcott, Lady Southcott	Flecknoe, <i>Erminia</i> (1661)
Queen Catherine of Braganza, queen consort of Charles II	Medbourne, <i>St Cecily</i> (1666)
Anna Scott, duchess of Monmouth and duchess of Buccleuch in her own right	Dryden, <i>The Indian Emperour</i> (1667)
Frances Wentworth, countess of Roscommon	K. Philips, <i>Pompey</i> (1667)
Elizabeth Boyle, countess of Cork and countess of Burlington in her own right	K. Philips, <i>Pompey</i> (1667)
Frances Teresa Stuart, duchess of Richmond and Lennox	Sedley, <i>The Mulberry-Garden</i> (1668)
Mrs. Alice Barret	Thompson (?), <i>The English Rogue</i> (1668)
Anna Scott, duchess of Monmouth and duchess of Buccleuch in her own right	Stapylton, <i>The Tragedie of Hero and Leander</i> (1669)
Mary Yate, Lady Yate of Harvington	Boothby, <i>Marcelia</i> (1670)
Mrs. Stanhope Hutchinson	Cotton, <i>Horace</i> (1671)
Anna Scott, duchess of Monmouth and duchess of Buccleuch in her own right	Settle, <i>Cambyses</i> (1671)
Margaret Cavendish, duchess of Newcastle	Shadwell, <i>The Humorists</i> (1671)
Margaret Cavendish, duchess of Newcastle	Flecknoe, <i>Emilia</i> (1672)
Mary Rich, countess of Warwick	Tuke, <i>The Souls Warfare</i> (1672)
Barbara Palmer, duchess of Cleveland in her own right	Wycherley, <i>Love in a Wood</i> (1672)
Elizabeth Monck, duchess of Albemarle	Settle, <i>Herod and Mariamne</i> (1673)
Eleanor Gwyn	Duffett, <i>The Spanish Rogue</i> (1674)
Mary Cavendish, wife to lord Cavendish and daughter of James Butler, duke of Ormond	Dancer, <i>Agrippa, King of Alba</i> (1675)
Madam S. C.	Belon (?), <i>The Mock Duellist</i> (1675)
Mary Stuart, Princess Royal (later Mary II,	Crowne, <i>Calisto</i> (1675)



Queen of England, Scotland and Ireland)	
Mary of Modena, duchess of York, consort of James Stuart	Etherege, <i>The Man of Mode</i> (1676)
Louise de K�roualle, duchess of Portsmouth in her own right	Lee, <i>Sophonisba</i> (1676)
Louise de K�roualle, duchess of Portsmouth in her own right	Lee, <i>Gloriana</i> (1676)
Katherine Herbert, wife to James Herbert of Tythorpe House and daughter of Thomas Osborne, earl of Danby	Banks, <i>The Rival Kings</i> (1677)
Louise de K�roualle, duchess of Portsmouth in her own right	Crowne, <i>The Destruction of Jerusalem</i> (1677)
Mary of Modena, duchess of York, consort of James Stuart	Dryden, <i>The State of Innocence and Fall of Man</i> (1677)
Isabella Fitzroy, duchess of Grafton, consort of Henry FitzRoy	de La Roche-Guilhen, <i>Rare en tout</i> (1677)
Elizabeth Monck, duchess of Albemarle	Settle, <i>Ibrahim</i> (1677)
Elizabeth Delaval, daughter to the earl of Newburgh	Settle, <i>Pastor Fido</i> (1677)
Mother Bennet	Wycherley, <i>The Plain-Dealer</i> (1677)
Mary Stuart, Princess Royal (later Mary II, Queen of England, Scotland and Ireland)	Cooke, <i>Love's Triumph</i> (1678)
Mary of Modena, duchess of York, consort of James Stuart	Pordage, <i>The Siege of Babylon</i> (1678)
Catherine Manners, Lady Roos	Banks, <i>The Destruction of Troy</i> (1679)
Eleanor Gwyn	Behn, <i>The Feign'd Curtizans</i> (1679)
Elizabeth Monck, duchess of Albemarle	Crowne, <i>The Ambitious Statesman</i> (1679)
Anna Scott, duchess of Monmouth and duchess of Buccleuch in her own right	Ecclestone, <i>Noah's Flood</i> (1679)
Frances Teresa Stuart, duchess of Richmond and Lennox	Lee, <i>Theodosius</i> (1680)
Mary of Modena, duchess of York, consort of James Stuart	Otway, <i>The Orphan</i> (1680)

Anne Stuart, Princess Royal	Banks, <i>The Unhappy Favourite</i> (1682)
Elizabeth Percy, duchess of Somerset	Banks, <i>Vertue Betray'd</i> (1682)
Louise de K�roualle, duchess of Portsmouth in her own right	Otway, <i>Venice Preserv'd</i> (1682)
Henrietta Wentworth, Baroness Wentworth of Nettlestead in her own right	Settle, <i>The Heir of Morocco</i> (1682)
Mary Howard, duchess of Norfolk	Banks, <i>The Island Queens</i> (1684)
Mary Howe	Wharton, <i>Love's Martyr</i> (c. 1685)
Madam Welldon	G.J., <i>The Widdow Ranter</i> (1690)
Mary Butler, duchess of Ormond	Powell, <i>Alphonso, King of Naples</i> (1691)
Mary II, Queen of England, Scotland and Ireland)	Shadwell, A., <i>The Volunteers</i> (1693)
Mary Butler, duchess of Ormond	D'Urfey, <i>The Comical History of Don Quixote, Part 1</i> (1694)
Anne Stuart, Princess Royal and later Queen of Great Britain and Ireland	Banks, <i>Cyrus the Great</i> (1696)
Anne Stuart, Princess Royal and later Queen of Great Britain and Ireland	Congreve, <i>The Mourning Bride</i> (1697)
Mrs. Cook of Norfolk	Pix, <i>Queen Catharine</i> (1698)
Anne Stuart, Princess Royal and later Queen of Great Britain and Ireland	Trotter, <i>Fatal Friendship</i> (1698)
Juliana Boyle, countess of Burlington	Harris, <i>Love's a Lottery</i> (1699)
Juliana Boyle, countess of Burlington	Pix, <i>The False Friend</i> (1699)
Sarah Churchill, duchess of Marlborough	Boyer, <i>Achilles</i> (1700)
Henrietta Paulet, duchess of Bolton	Pix, <i>The Beau Defeated</i> (1700)
Sarah Piers	Trotter, <i>Love at a Loss</i> (1701)
Geertruid Johanna van Keppel, countess of Albemarle	Steele, <i>The Funeral</i> (1702)
Katherine Manners, Baroness Gower	Anon., <i>The Fickle Shepherdess</i> (1703)
Frances Cecil, countess of Salisbury	Pix, <i>The Different Widows</i> (1703)
Juliana Boyle, countess of Burlington	Playford, <i>The Tragedy of King Saul</i> (1703)

Mary Butler, duchess of Ormond	Rowe, <i>The Fair Penitent</i> (1703)
Henrietta Godolphin, countess of Godolphin	Trapp, <i>Abra-Mule</i> (1704)
Mary Butler, duchess of Ormond	M. N., <i>The Faithful General</i> (1706)
Lucy Wharton, countess of Wharton and Viscountess Winchendon	Swiny, <i>Camilla</i> (1706)
Henrietta Godolphin, countess of Godolphin	Trotter, <i>The Revolution of Sweden</i> (1706)
Adelaide Roffeni Talbot, duchess of Shrewsbury	Johnson, <i>The Force of Friendship</i> (1710)
Anne, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland	Hill, <i>Rinaldo</i> (1711)
Juliana Boyle, countess of Burlington	Heidegger, <i>Antiochus</i> (1712)
Anne Hamilton, duchess of Hamilton in her own right	Hughes, <i>Calypso and Telemachus</i> (1712)
Henrietta Godolphin, countess of Godolphin	Heidegger, <i>Arminius</i> (1714)
Mary Montagu, duchess of Montagu	A. Philips, <i>The Distrest Mother</i> (1712)

## APPENDIX 2: PLAYS INSCRIBED TO WOMEN

Dedicatee	Dedicator, play
Anne Lovelace, Baroness Wentworth	Killigrew, <i>The Princess</i> (1664)
Lady Ursula Bertie	Killigrew, <i>The Parson's Wedding</i> (1664)
Elizabeth Dormer, countess of Carnarvon	Killigrew, <i>The Pilgrim</i> (1664)
Anne Villiers, countess of Morton	Killigrew, <i>Cecilia and Clorinda. Part One</i> (1664)
Dorothy Sidney, countess of Sunderland	Killigrew, <i>Cecilia and Clorinda. Part Two</i> (1664)
Mary Villiers, duchess of Richmond and Lennox	Killigrew, <i>Bellamira her Dream. Part One</i> (1664)
Anne Savile, countess of Sussex	Killigrew, <i>Bellamira her Dream. Part Two</i> (1664)
Elizabeth Killigrew, Viscountess Shanon	Killigrew, <i>Claricilla</i> (1664)
The Lady Crompton, Killigrew's niece	Killigrew, <i>The Prisoners</i> (1664)
William and Margaret Cavendish, duke and duchess of Newcastle	Flecknoe, <i>The Damoselles a la Mode</i> (1667)
Sarah Churchill, duchess of Marlborough	Addison, <i>Rosamond</i> (1707)
Elizabeth Montague, countess of Sandwich	Manley, <i>Almyna</i> (1707)
Jemima Grey, duchess of Kent	Neri, <i>Clotilda</i> (1709)

**APPENDIX 3: DEDICATIONS ADDRESSED TO MEN**

Dedicator	Play	Dedicatee
Tatham	<i>The Rump</i> (1661)	Walter James
Various authors	<i>Gratiae Theatrales, or, A Choice Ternary of English Plays</i> (1662)	William Austin, Esquire
Cokain	<i>The Tragedy of Ovid</i> (1662)	Charles Cotton, Esquire
Cavendish, M.	<i>Plays</i> (1662)	William Cavendish, marquess of Newcastle
Anon.	<i>The Unfortunate Usurper</i> (1663)	Mr Edward Umfreville
Davenant	<i>The Siege of Rhodes</i> (1663)	Edward Hyde, earl of Clarendon
Head	<i>Hic et Ubique</i> (1663)	Charles [i.e. James] Scott, duke of Monmouth and Orkney
Jordan	<i>Tricks of Youth</i> (1663)	William Wimberlet, Esquire, M. Loman, . . . Knight <sup>1</sup>
Killigrew	<i>Thomaso; or, The Wanderer, The First Part</i> (1663)	Prince Rupert of the Rhine (“Prince Palatine Polixander”)
Stapylton	<i>The Slighted Maid</i> (1663)	James, Scott, duke of Monmouth and Orkney
Tuke	<i>The Adventures of Five Hours</i> (1663)	Henry Howard, Lord Howard of Norfolk
Dryden	<i>The Rival Ladies</i> (1664)	Roger Boyle, earl of Orrery
Etherege	<i>The Comical Revenge</i> (1664)	Charles Sackville, Lord Buckhurst
Flecknoe	<i>Love’s Kingdom</i> (1664)	William Cavendish, marquess of Newcastle
Brathwait	<i>Regicidium</i> (1665)	William Wentworth

<sup>1</sup> Each of the three extant copies bear a different dedicatee (the name being stamped). The third copy, which is held at the Huntington Library has the head trimmed and the name of the dedicatee cannot be read.

Dover	<i>The Roman Generalls, or, The Distressed Ladies</i> (1667)	Robert Greville, Lord Brook
Jordan	<i>Wealth Outwitted</i> (1668)	John Philips, Esquire
Shadwell	<i>The Sullen Lovers</i> (1668)	William Cavendish, duke of Newcastle
St Serfe	<i>Tarugo's Wiles, or, The Coffee-House</i> (1668)	George Gordon, marquess of Huntly, earl of Eigney and Lord Strathbogy
Carr	<i>Pluto Furens and Vincius</i> (1669)	Sir John James, Sir William Greene, Sir Samuel Starlyn, Sir John Forth Sheriff of London, John Breden, John Bucknall, Aldermen; Emery Hill, Esq; with the rest of the Worshipful Corporatilon of Brewers
Dryden	<i>Tyrannic Love</i> (1670)	James Scott, duke of Monmouth and Buccleuch
Medbourne	<i>Tartuffe</i> (1670)	Henry Howard, Lord Howard of Norfolk
Crowne	<i>Juliana</i> (1671)	Roger Boyle, earl of Orrery
Dancer	<i>Nicomede</i> (1671)	Thomas Butler, earl of Ossory
Dryden	<i>An Evening's Love</i> (1671)	William Cavendish, duke of Newcastle
Joyner	<i>The Roman Empress</i> (1671)	Sir Charles Sedley, Baronet
Dryden	<i>The Conquest of Granada, Part I</i> (1672)	James Stuart, duke of York
Lacy	<i>The Old Troop</i> (1672)	George Fitzroy
Lacy	<i>The Dumb Lady</i> (1672)	Charles Fitzroy
Ravenscroft	<i>The Citizen Turn'd Gentleman</i> (1672)	Prince Rupert of the Rhine
Shadwell	<i>The Miser</i> (1672)	Charles Sackville, Lord Buckhurst
Davenant	<i>Works</i> (1673)	James Stuart, duke of York
Dryden	<i>Amboyna</i> (1673)	Thomas Clifford, Lord Clifford of Chudleigh

Dryden	<i>The Assination or Love in a Nunnery</i> (1673)	Sir Charles Sedley, Baronet
Settle	<i>The Empress of Morocco</i> (1673)	Henry Howard, earl of Norwich
Shadwell	<i>Epsom Wells</i> (1673)	William Cavendish, duke of Newcastle
D., J.	<i>The Mall, or, The Modish Lovers</i> (1674)	William Whitcomb, Junior, Esquire
Perrin	<i>Ariadne, or, The Marriage of Bacchus</i> (1674)	Charles II
Wright	<i>Thyestes</i> (1674)	Bennet Sherard, Lord Sherard
Crowne	<i>The Country Wit</i> (1675)	Charles Sackville, earl of Middlesex
Fane	<i>Love in the Dark</i> (1675)	John Wilmot, earl of Rochester
Lee	<i>Nero, Emperor of Rome</i> (1675)	John Wilmot, earl of Rochester
Otway	<i>Alcibiades</i> (1675)	Charles Sackville, earl of Middlesex
Settle	<i>Love and Revenge</i> (1675)	William Cavendish, duke of Newcastle
Dryden	<i>Aureng-Zebe</i> (1676)	John Sheffield, earl of Mulgrave
D'Urfey	<i>The Siege of Memphis</i> (1676)	Henry Chevers, Esquire
Otway	<i>Don Carlos, Prince of Spain</i> (1676)	James Stuart, duke of York
Settle	<i>The Conquest of China by the Tartars</i> (1676)	Lord Castle-Rising
Shadwell	<i>The Libertine</i> (1676)	William Cavendish, duke of Newcastle
Shadwell	<i>The Virtuoso</i> (1676)	William Cavendish, duke of Newcastle

D'Urfey	<i>A Fond Husband</i> (1677)	James Butler, duke of Ormond
D'Urfey	<i>Madam Fickle</i> (1677)	James Butler, duke of Ormond
Smith	<i>Cytherea</i> (1677)	"To the Northern Gentry"
Leaner	<i>The Country Innocence</i> (1677)	Sir Francis Hinchman
Lee	<i>The Rival Queens</i> (1677)	John Sheffield, earl of Mulgrave
Otway	<i>Titus and Berenice, with The Cheats of Scarpin</i> (1677)	John Wilmot, earl of Rochester
Lee	<i>Milthridates, King of Pontus</i> (1678)	Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex
Otway	<i>Friendship in Fashion</i> (1678)	Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex
Shadwell	<i>Timon of Athens</i> (1678)	George Villiers, duke of Buckingham
Shipman	<i>Henry III of France</i> (1678)	Henry Pierrepont, marquess of Dorchester
Tate	<i>Brutus of Alba</i> (1678)	Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex
Bancroft	<i>Sertorius</i> (1679)	Captain Richard Savage
Bedloe	<i>The Excommunicated Prince</i> (1679)	George Villiers, duke of Buckingham
Dryden	<i>Troilus and Cressida</i> (1679)	Robert Spencer, earl of Sunderland
Shadwell	<i>A True Widow</i> (1679)	Sir Charles Sedley, Baronet
Dryden	<i>The Kind Keeper</i> (1680)	John Vaughan, Lord Vaughan
Lee	<i>Caesar Borgia</i> (1680)	Philip Sidney, earl of Pembroke and Montgomery
Maidwell	<i>The Loving Enemies</i> (1680)	Charles Fox, Esquire
Otway	<i>The History and Fall of Caius Marius</i> (1680)	Anthony Cary, Viscount Falkland



Settle	<i>Fatal Love</i> (1680)	Sir Robert Owen
Settle	<i>The Female Prelate</i> (1680)	Anthony Ashley Cooper, earl of Shaftesbury
Shadwell	<i>The Woman Captain</i> (1680)	Henry Cavendish, Lord Ogle
Tate	<i>The Loyal General</i> (1680)	Edward Tayler, Esquire
Anon.	<i>Rome's Follies, or, The Amorous Friars</i> (1681)	Anthony Ashley Cooper, earl of Shaftesbury
Behn	<i>The Second Part of The Rover</i> (1681)	James Stuart, duke of York
Crowne	<i>Henry VI, the First Part</i> (1681)	Sir Charles Sedley, Baronet
Dryden	<i>The Spanish Friar</i> (1681)	John Lord Haughton
D'Urfey	<i>Sir Barnaby Whigg</i> (1681)	George Berkeley, earl of Berkeley
Lee	<i>Lucius Junius Brutus</i> (1681)	Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex
Otway	<i>The Soldier's Fortune</i> (1681)	Mr. Richard Bentley
Tate	<i>Richard II</i> (1681)	George Raynsford, Esquire
Tate	<i>King Lear</i> (1681)	Thomas Boteler, Esquire
Behn	<i>The Roundheads</i> (1682)	Henry Fitzroy, duke of Grafton
Behn	<i>The City-Heiress</i> (1682)	Henry Howard, earl of Arundel and Lord Mowbray
Southerne	<i>The Loyal Brother</i> (1682)	Charles Lennox, duke of Richmond and Lennox
Tate	<i>The Ingratitude of a Common-Wealth, Or, The Fall of Laius Martius Coriolanus</i> (1682)	Charles Somerset, Lord Herbert

Behn	<i>The Young King</i> (1683)	“To Philaster”
Dryden	<i>The Duke of Guise</i> (1683)	Lawrence Hyde, earl of Rochester
Otway	<i>The Atheist, or, The Second Part of The Soldier’s Fortune</i> (1684)	William Savile, Lord Elland
Southerne	<i>The Disappointment</i> (1684)	James Butler, earl of Ossory
Crowne	<i>Sir Courtly Nice</i> (1685)	James Butler, duke of Ormond
Tate	<i>A Duke and No Duke</i> (1685)	Sir George Hewett, Baronet
Tate	<i>Cuckolds Haven</i> (1685)	Colonel Edmund Ashton
D’Urfey	<i>The Banditti</i> (1686)	“To the Extreme Witty, and Judicious Gentleman, Sir Critick-Cat-call.”
D’Urfey	<i>A Common-Wealth of Women</i> (1686)	Christopher Monck, duke of Albemarle
Fane	<i>The Sacrifice</i> (1686)	Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex
Jevon	<i>The Devil of a Wife</i> (1686)	“To my Worthy Friends and Patrons at Lockets Ordinary”
Talbot	<i>Troas</i> (1686)	Charles Talbot, earl of Shrewsbury
Behn	<i>Emperor of the Moon</i> (1687)	Henry Somerset, marquess of Worcester
Behn	<i>The Luckey Chance</i> (1687)	Lawrence Hyde, earl of Rochester
Grabu	<i>Albion and Albanus</i> (1687)	James II
Ravenscroft	<i>Titus Andronicus</i> (1687)	Henry Howard, Lord Arundel

Tate	<i>The Island-Princess</i> (1687)	Henry Walgrave, Baron of Chewton
Crowne	<i>Darius</i> (1688)	Sr. George Hewett, Baronet
D'Urfey	<i>A Fool's Preferment</i> (1688)	Charles Morpeth, Lord Morpeth
Mountfort	<i>The Injur'd Lovers</i> (1688)	James Hamilton, earl of Arran
Shadwell	<i>The Squire of Alsatia</i> (1688)	Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex
Lee	<i>The Princess of Cleve</i> (1689)	Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex
Shadwell	<i>Bury-Fair</i> (1689)	Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex
Crowne	<i>The English Friar</i> (1690)	William Cavendish, earl of Devonshire
Dryden	<i>Amphitryon</i> (1690)	Sir William Levison Gower, Baron Gower
Dryden	<i>Don Sebastian, King of Portugal</i> (1690)	Philip Sidney, earl of Leicester
Mountfort	<i>The Successful Strangers</i> (1690)	Thomas Wharton
Powell	<i>The Treacherous Brothers</i> (1690)	"To the Patentees, and Sharers of their Majesties Theatre"
Shadwell	<i>The Amorous Bigotte with The Second Part of Tegue O Dively</i> (1690)	Charles Talbot, earl of Shrewsbury
Anon.	<i>The Late Revolution, or The Happy Change</i> (1690)	"To all true Englishmen"
Dryden	<i>King Arthur</i> (1691)	George Savile, marquess of Halifax
Smith	<i>Win Her or Take Her</i> (1691)	Peregrine Osborne, earl of Danby

D'Urfey	<i>Bussy D'Ambois</i> (1691)	Edward Howard, earl of Carlisle
D'Urfey	<i>Love for Money</i> (1691)	Charles Grenville, Viscount Lansdowne
Harris and Mountfort	<i>The Mistakes</i> (1691)	Godfrey Kneller Esquire
Mountfort	<i>Edward III, with the Fall of Mortimer</i> (1691)	Henry Sidney, Viscount Sidney
Mountfort	<i>Greenwich Park</i> (1691)	Algernon Capell, earl of Essex
Settle	<i>Distress'd Innocence</i> (1691)	John Lord Cutts, Baron of Gowran
Southerne	<i>Sir Anthony Love</i> (1691)	Thomas Skipwith, Esquire
Bourne	<i>The Contented Cuckold</i> (1692)	John Huxley of Wyerlhall, Esquire, and Richard Andrew, Gentleman
Brady	<i>The Rape</i> (1692)	Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex
Dryden	<i>Cleomenes</i> (1692)	Lawrence Hyde, earl of Rochester
D'Urfey	<i>The Marriage-Hater Matched</i> (1692)	James Butler, duke of Ormond
Shaw	<i>Poikilophronesia, or, The Different Humours of Men</i> (1692)	Sir John Shaw, Baronet, Sir John More, Knight, Christopher Pack, Esquire
Rivers	<i>The Traytor</i> (1692)	Donough MacCarthy, earl of Clancarty

Congreve	<i>The Old Bachelor</i> (1693)	Charles Boyle, Lord Clifford
D'Urfey	<i>The Richmond Heiress</i> (1693)	Sir Nicholas Garrard, Baronet
Powell	<i>A Very Good Wife</i> (1693)	Alexander Popham, Esquire
Southerne	<i>The Maid's Last Prayer</i> (1693)	Charles Boyle, Lord Clifford
Wright	<i>The Female Vertuosos</i> (1693)	Charles Finch, earl of Winchelsea
Banks	<i>The Innocent Usurper</i> (1693)	Richard Bentley
Congreve	<i>The Double Dealer</i> (1694)	Charles Montague
Crowne	<i>The Married Beau</i> (1694)	John Sheffield, earl of Mulgrave
Dryden	<i>Love Triumphant</i> (1694)	James Cecil, earl of Salisbury
D'Urfey	<i>Don Quixote, Part II</i> (1694)	Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex
Echard	<i>Plautus' Comedies</i> (1694)	Sir Charles Sidley, Baronet
Settle	<i>The Ambitious Slave</i> (1694)	John Bright, Esquire
Southerne	<i>The Fatal Marriage</i> (1694)	Anthony Hammond, Esquire
Congreve	<i>Love for Love</i> (1695)	Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex
Dilke	<i>The Lover's Luck</i> (1695)	Thomas Wentworth, Lord Raby
Hopkins	<i>Pyrrhus, King of Epirus</i> (1695)	Prince William, duke of Gloucester

Settle	<i>Philaster</i> (1695)	Meinhardt Schomberg, duke of Schonberg and Lemster
Ravenscroft	<i>The Canterbury Guests</i> (1695)	Rowland Eyre, Esquire
Anon.	<i>The Cornish Comedy</i> (1696)	Christopher Rich, Esquire
Behn	<i>The Younger Brother</i> (1696)	Collonel Codrington
Dryden	<i>The Husband His Own Cuckold</i> (1696)	Sir Robert Howard
D'Urfey	<i>The Comical History of Don Quixote, Part III</i> (1696)	Charles Montague, Esquire
Gould	<i>The Rival Sisters</i> (1696)	James Bertie, earl of Abingdon
Harris	<i>The City Bride</i> (1696)	Sir John Walter, Baronet
Hopkins	<i>Neglected Virtue</i> (1696)	Sir John Smith, Baronet
Manley	<i>The Royal Mischief</i> (1696)	William Cavendish, duke of Devonshire
Motteux	<i>Love's a Jest</i> (1696)	Charles Boyle, Lord Clifford of Lanesborough
Pix	<i>Ibrahim</i> (1696)	Richard Minchall, Esquire
Pix	<i>The Spanish Wives</i> (1696)	Colonel Thomas Tipping, of Whitfield
Powell (?)	<i>Bonduca; or The British Heroine</i> (1696)	John Jeffreys, Baron of Wem
Southerne	<i>Oroonoko</i> (1696)	William Cavendish, duke of Devonshire
Trotter	<i>Agnes de Castro</i> (1696)	Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex
Anon.	<i>Timoleon</i> (1697)	"To His Friend J.F."

Dennis	<i>A Plot and No Plot</i> (1697)	Robert Spencer, earl of Sunderland
Dilke	<i>The City Lady</i> (1697)	Fisher Wentworth, Esquire
D'Urfey	<i>The Intrigues at Versailles</i> (1697)	Sir Charles Sedley the Elder, Baronet, and Sir Charles Sedley, his son.
D'Urfey	<i>Cynthia and Endimion</i> (1697)	Henry Sidney, earl of Romney
Hopkins	<i>Boadicea, Queen of England</i> (1697)	William Congreve
Motteux	<i>The Loves of Mars and Venus</i> (1697)	Collonel Christopher Codrington
Motteux	<i>Europe's Revels for the Peace and His Majesty's Happy Return</i> (1697)	Sir Theodore Janssen of Wimbledon
Motteux	<i>The Novelty</i> (1697)	Charles Caesar, Esquire
Powell	<i>Brutus of Alba</i> (1697)	Samuel Briscoe
Ravenscroft	<i>The Anatomist</i> (1697)	Thomas Ravenscroft, Esquire
Settle	<i>The World in the Moon</i> (1697)	Christopher Rich, Esquire
Crowne	<i>Caligula</i> (1698)	Henry Sidney, earl of Romney
Dilke	<i>The Pretenders</i> (1698)	Thomas Barnardiston, Esquire
D'Urfey	<i>The Campaigners</i> (1698)	Thomas Wharton, Baron Wharton
Gildon	<i>Phaeton, or The Fatal Divorce</i> (1698)	Charles Montague, Esquire
Motteux	<i>Beauty in Distress</i> (1698)	Henry Heveningham, Esquire

Philips	<i>The Revengful Queen</i> (1698)	James Butler, duke of Ormond
Pix	<i>The Deceiver Deceived</i> (1698)	Sir Robert Marsham, Knight and Baronet
Ravenscroft	<i>The Italian Husband</i> (1698)	Henry Conyers
Walker	<i>Victorious Love</i> (1698)	James Kendal, Esquire
Cibber	<i>Xerxes</i> (1699)	Samuel Adams, Gentleman
Dennis	<i>Rinaldo and Armida</i> (1699)	James Butler, duke of Ormond
Farquhar	<i>Love and a Bottle</i> (1699)	Peregrine Osborne, marquess of Carmarthen
Motteux	<i>The Island Princess</i> (1699)	Popham Conway, Esquire
Pinkethman	<i>Love without Interest, or, The Man Too Hard for the Master</i> (1699)	Thomas Fairfax, Lord Fairfax of Cameron; John Jeffreys, Lord Jeffreys; William Widdrington, Baron Widdrington; John Sheffield, Lord Buckingham; James Howard, Lord Howard; and John Howard, Lord Howard
Anon.	<i>Feign'd Friendship</i> (1699)	James Francis Edward Stuart
Burnaby	<i>The Reformed Wife</i> (1700)	John Stewart, Lord of Lorne
Centlivre	<i>The Perjur'd Husband</i> (1700)	Wriothesley Russell, duke of Bedford
Cibber	<i>Richard III</i> (1700)	Henry Brett, Esquire
Craufurd	<i>Courtship a la Mode</i> (1700)	John Leneve, Esquire
Congreve	<i>The Way of the World</i> (1700)	Ralph Montagu, earl of Montagu



D'Urfey	<i>The Famous History and Fall of Massainello: or, A Fisherman a Prince</i> (1700)	Thomas Leigh, Lord Leigh
Farquhar	<i>The Constant Couple</i> (1700)	Sir Roger Mostyn, Baronet
Hopkins	<i>Friendship Improv'd, or, The Female Warriour</i> (1700)	Edward Coke, Esquire
Manning	<i>The Generous Choice</i> (1700)	Christopher Codrington, Esquire
Oldmixon	<i>The Grove, or, Love's Paradise an Opera</i> (1700)	Mr. Freeman
Baker	<i>The Humour of the Age</i> (1700)	Charles Montagu, Lord Halifax
Burnaby	<i>The Ladies Visiting-Day</i> (1700)	James Butler, duke of Ormond
Corey	<i>A Cure for Jealousy</i> (1700)	Edmund Fullwood, Esquire
Farquhar	<i>Sir Harry Wildair</i> (1701)	Arnold Joost van Keppel, earl of Albemarle
Gildon	<i>Love's Victim</i> (1701)	Charles Montagu, Lord Halifax
Pix	<i>The Double Distress</i> (1701)	John Berkeley, Viscount Fitzhardinge
Rowe	<i>The Ambitious Step-Mother</i> (1701)	Edward Villiers, earl of Jersey
Settle	<i>The Virgin Prophetess</i> (1701)	Sir Charles Duncomb, Knight
D'Urfey	<i>The Bath, or, The Western Lass</i> (1701)	Archibald Campbell
Trotter	<i>The Unhappy Penitent</i> (1701)	Charles Montagu, Lord Halifax

Centlivre	<i>The Beau's Duel: or A Soldier for the Ladies</i> (1702)	Samuel Brown, Esquire
Manning	<i>Altemira</i> (1702)	Lionel Boyle
Farquhar	<i>The Inconstant</i> (1702)	Richard Tighe, Esquire
Higgons	<i>The Generous Conqueror</i> (1702)	John Sheffield, marquess of Normanby
Dennis	<i>The Comical Gallant</i> (1702)	George Granville, Esquire
Rowe	<i>Tamerlane</i> (1702)	William Cavendish, marquess of Hartington
Sherburne	<i>The Tragedies of L. Annæus Seneca the Philosopher</i> (1702)	Richard Francis Sherburne of Stonyhurst, Esquire
Wiseman	<i>Antiochus The Great, or The Fatal Relapse</i> (1702)	John Jeffreys, Baron of Wem
Baker	<i>Tunbridge-Walks</i> (1703)	John Howe, Esquire
Centlivre	<i>Love's Contrivance</i> (1703)	Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex
Centlivre	<i>The Stolen Heiress</i> (1703)	Sir Stafford Fairborne
Cibber	<i>She Would and She Would Not</i> (1703)	James Butler, duke of Ormond
D'Urfey	<i>Old Mode and the New</i> (1703)	Charles Lennox, duke of Richmond and Lennox
Farquhar	<i>The Twin-Rivals</i> (1703)	Henry Bret, Esquire
Steele	<i>The Lying Lover</i> (1703)	James Butler, duke of Ormond
Baker	<i>An Act at Oxford</i> (1704)	Edward Dudley, Lord Dudley

Corey	<i>The Metamorphosis: or the Old Lover Outwitted</i> (1704)	Clayton Milbourn, Esquire
Dennis	<i>Liberty Asserted</i> (1704)	Anthony Henley, Esquire
Centlivre	<i>The Gamester</i> (1705)	George Hastings, earl of Huntingdon
Centlivre	<i>The Basset-Table</i> (1705)	Arthur Annesley, Baron of Altham
Chaves	<i>The Cares of Love, or A Night's Adventure</i> (1705)	Sir William Read
Cibber	<i>Careless Husband</i> (1705)	John Campbell, duke and earl of Argyll
Farquhar	<i>The Stage-Coach</i> (1705)	Samuel Bagshaw, Esquire
Mountfort	<i>Zelmane</i> (1705)	Sir Bouchier Wrey, Baronet
Steele	<i>The Tender Husband</i> (1705)	Joseph Addison
Walker	<i>The Wit of a Woman</i> (1705)	John Caper, Gentleman
Centlivre	<i>Love at a Venture</i> (1706)	Henry Somerset, duke of Beaufort
Cibber	<i>Perolla and Izadora</i> (1706)	Charles Boyle Earl of Orrery
D'Urfey	<i>Wonders in the Sun</i> (1706)	“To the Right Noble, Honourable and Ingenious Patrons of Poetry, Musick, &c. The Celebrated Society of the Kit-Cat-Club”
Estcourt	<i>The Fair Example</i> (1706)	Christopher Rich, Esquire
Farquhar	<i>The Recruiting Officer</i> (1706)	“To all friends round the Wrekin”
Rowe	<i>Ulysses</i> (1706)	Sidney Godolphin, Lord Godolphin

Centlivre	<i>The Platonick Lady</i> (1707)	“To all the Generous Encouragers of Female Ingenuity”
Cibber	<i>The Lady's Last Stake</i> (1707)	Henry Grey, marquess of Kent
Smith	<i>Phædra and Hippolitus</i> (1707)	Charles Montagu, Lord Halifax
Baker	<i>The Fine Lady's Airs; or, an Equipage of Lovers</i> (1708)	Sir Andrew Fontaine
Farquhar	<i>The Comedies of Mr. George Farquhar</i> (1708)	John Eyre, Esquire
Goring	<i>Irene; or, The Fair Greek</i> (1708)	Henry Somerset, duke of Beaufort
Motteux	<i>Love's Triumph</i> (1708)	Thomas Frankland, Esquire
Rowe	<i>The Royal Convert</i> (1708)	Charles Montagu, Lord Halifax
Centlivre	<i>The Busie Body</i> (1709)	John Sommers, Lord Sommers
Centlivre	<i>The Man's Bewitch'd</i> (1709)	William Cavendish, duke of Devonshire
Dennis	<i>Appius and Virginia</i> (1709)	Sidney Godolphin, earl of Godolphin
D'Urfey	<i>The Modern Prophets</i> (1709)	Sir William Scawen, Baronet.
Pix	<i>The Adventures in Madrid</i> (1709)	Sir Jacob Banks
Heidegger	<i>Almahide</i> (1710)	Giovanni Wencislao Conte di Gallasso
Grimaldi	<i>L'Idaspe fedele, Opera</i> (1710)	Henry Grey, marquess and earl of Kent
Hill	<i>Elfrid</i> (1710)	Henry Grey, marquess and earl of Kent

Shadwell, Ch.	<i>The Fair Quaker of Deal</i> (1710)	“To My Generous and Obliging Friends of The County of Kent”
Centlivre	<i>Mar-Plot</i> (1711)	Henry Bentinck, earl of Portland
Johnson, Ch.	<i>The Generous Husband</i> (1711)	John Ashburnham, Lord Ashburnham
Haym	<i>Etearco</i> (1711)	Charles Montagu, Lord Halifax
Settle	<i>The City-Ramble</i> (1711)	Henry Hare, Baron of Colerane
Centlivre	<i>The Perplex'd Lovers</i> (1712)	Sir Henry Furnesse, Baronet
Johnson, Ch.	<i>The Wife's Relief</i> (1712)	Henry Bentinck, earl of Portland
Shadwell, Ch.	<i>The Humours of the Army</i> (1713)	Major-General Newton
Heidegger	<i>Ernelinda</i> (1713)	Richard Lowther, Viscount Lonsdale, Baron Lowther
Anon.	<i>The Apparition</i> (1714)	John Carteret, Lord Carteret
Centlivre	<i>The Wonder: A Woman Keeps A Secret</i> (1714)	George Augustus, Electoral Prince of Hanover
Haym	<i>Croesus. King of Lydia</i> (1714)	Henry Bentick, earl of Portland
Rowe	<i>Jane Shore</i> (1714)	Charles Douglas, duke of Queensberry and Dover
Ozell	<i>The Works of Monsieur de Moliere</i> (1714)	Lionel Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex

#### APPENDIX 4: DEDICATIONS AND INSCRIPTIONS BY PLAYWRIGHT

Dedicator	Play	Dedicatee
Anon.	<i>The Fickle Shepherdess</i> (1703)	Katherine Manners, Baroness Gower
Addison	<i>Rosamond</i> (1707)	Sarah Churchill, duchess of Marlborough
Banks	<i>Cyrus the Great</i> (1696)	Anne Stuart, Princess Royal and later Queen of Great Britain and Ireland
Banks	<i>The Destruction of Troy</i> (1679)	Catherine Manners, Lady Roos
Banks	<i>The Innocent Usurper</i> (1693)	Richard Bentley
Banks	<i>The Island Queens</i> (1684)	Mary Howard, duchess of Norfolk
Banks	<i>The Rival Kings</i> (1677)	Katherine Herbert, wife to James Herbert of Tythorpe House and daughter of Thomas Osborne, earl of Danby
Banks	<i>The Unhappy Favourite</i> (1682)	Anne Stuart, Princess Royal
Banks	<i>Vertue Betray'd</i> (1682)	Elizabeth Percy, duchess of Somerset
Behn	<i>The City-Heiress</i> (1682)	Henry Howard, earl of Arundel and Lord Mowbray
Behn	<i>Emperor of the Moon</i> (1687)	Henry Somerset, marquess of Worcester
Behn	<i>The Feign'd Curtizans</i> (1679)	Eleanor Gwyn

Behn	<i>The Luckey Chance</i> (1687)	Lawrence Hyde, earl of Rochester
Behn	<i>The Roundheads</i> (1682)	Henry Fitzroy, duke of Grafton
Behn	<i>The Second Part of The Rover</i> (1681)	James Stuart, duke of York
Behn	<i>The Younger Brother</i> (1696)	Collonel Codrington
Behn	<i>The Young King</i> (1683)	“To Philaster”
Belon (?)	<i>The Mock Duellist</i> (1675)	Madam S. C.
Boothby	<i>Marcelia</i> (1670)	Mary Yate, Lady Yate of Harvington
Boyer	<i>Achilles</i> (1700)	Sarah Churchill, duchess of Marlborough
Cibber	<i>Careless Husband</i> (1705)	John Campbell, duke and earl of Argyll
Cibber	<i>The Lady's Last Stake</i> (1707)	Henry Grey, marquess of Kent
Cibber	<i>Perolla and Izadora</i> (1706)	Charles Boyle Earl of Orrery
Cibber	<i>Richard III</i> (1700)	Henry Brett, Esquire
Cibber	<i>She Would and She Would Not</i> (1703)	James Butler, duke of Ormond
Cibber	<i>Xerxes</i> (1699)	Samuel Adams, Gentleman
Congreve	<i>The Double Dealer</i> (1694)	Charles Montague
Congreve	<i>Love for Love</i> (1695)	Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex

Congreve	<i>The Mourning Bride</i> (1697)	Anne Stuart, Princess Royal and later Queen of Great Britain and Ireland
Congreve	<i>The Old Bachelor</i> (1693)	Charles Boyle, Lord Clifford
Congreve	<i>The Way of the World</i> (1700)	Ralph Montagu, earl of Montagu
Cooke	<i>Love's Triumph</i> (1678)	Mary Stuart, Princess Royal (later Mary II, Queen of England, Scotland and Ireland)
Cotton	<i>Horace</i> (1671)	Mrs. Stanhope Hutchinson
Crowne	<i>The Ambitious Statesman</i> (1679)	Elizabeth Monck, duchess of Albemarle
Crowne	<i>Caligula</i> (1698)	Henry Sidney, earl of Romney
Crowne	<i>Calisto</i> (1675)	Mary Stuart, Princess Royal (later Mary II, Queen of England, Scotland and Ireland)
Crowne	<i>The Country Wit</i> (1675)	Charles Sackville, earl of Middlesex
Crowne	<i>Sir Courtly Nice</i> (1685)	James Butler, duke of Ormond
Crowne	<i>Darius</i> (1688)	Sr. George Hewett, Baronet
Crowne	<i>The Destruction of Jerusalem</i> (1677)	Louise de K��roualle, duchess of Portsmouth in her
Crowne	<i>The English Friar</i> (1690)	William Cavendish, earl of Devonshire
Crowne	<i>Henry VI, the First Part</i> (1681)	Sir Charles Sedley, Baronet
Crowne	<i>Juliana</i> (1671)	Roger Boyle, earl of Orrery
Crowne	<i>The Married Beau</i> (1694)	John Sheffield, earl of Mulgrave
Dancer	<i>Agrippa, King of Alba</i>	Mary Cavendish, wife to lord Cavendish and



	(1675)	daughter of James Butler, duke of Ormond
Dancer	<i>Nicomede</i> (1671)	Thomas Butler, earl of Ossory
Dryden	<i>Amboyna</i> (1673)	Thomas Clifford, Lord Clifford of Chudleigh
Dryden	<i>Amphitryon</i> (1690)	Sir William Levison Gower, Baron Gower
Dryden	<i>The Assination or Love in a Nunnery</i> (1673)	Sir Charles Sedley, Baronet
Dryden	<i>Aureng-Zebe</i> (1676)	John Sheffield, earl of Mulgrave
Dryden	<i>Cleomenes</i> (1692)	Lawrence Hyde, earl of Rochester
Dryden	<i>The Conquest of Granada, Part I</i> (1672)	James Stuart, duke of York
Dryden	<i>Don Sebastian, King of Portugal</i> (1690)	Philip Sidney, earl of Leicester
Dryden	<i>The Duke of Guise</i> (1683)	Lawrence Hyde, earl of Rochester
Dryden	<i>An Evening's Love</i> (1671)	William Cavendish, duke of Newcastle
Dryden	<i>The Husband His Own Cuckold</i> (1696)	Sir Robert Howard
Dryden	<i>The Indian Emperour</i> (1667)	Anna Scott, duchess of Monmouth and duchess of Buccleuch in her own right
Dryden	<i>King Arthur</i> (1691)	George Savile, marquess of Halifax
Dryden	<i>The Kind Keeper</i> (1680)	John Vaughan, Lord Vaughan
Dryden	<i>Love Triumphant</i> (1694)	James Cecil, earl of Salisbury
Dryden	<i>The Rival Ladies</i> (1664)	Roger Boyle, earl of Orrery
Dryden	<i>The Spanish Friar</i> (1681)	John Lord Haughton

Dryden	<i>The State of Innocence and Fall of Man</i> (1677)	Mary of Modena, duchess of York, consort of James Stuart
Dryden	<i>Troilus and Cressida</i> (1679)	Robert Spencer, earl of Sunderland
Dryden	<i>Tyrannic Love</i> (1670)	James Scott, duke of Monmouth and Buccleuch
Duffett	<i>The Spanish Rogue</i> (1674)	Eleanor Gwyn
D'Urfey	<i>The Bath, or, The Western Lass</i> (1701)	Archibald Campbell
D'Urfey	<i>The Banditti</i> (1686)	"To the Extreme Witty, and Judicious Gentleman, Sir Critick-Cat-call."
D'Urfey	<i>Bussy D'Ambois</i> (1691)	Edward Howard, earl of Carlisle
D'Urfey	<i>The Campaigners</i> (1698)	Thomas Wharton, Baron Wharton
D'Urfey	<i>Cynthia and Endimion</i> (1697)	Henry Sidney, earl of Romney
D'Urfey	<i>A Common-Wealth of Women</i> (1686)	Christopher Monck, duke of Albemarle
D'Urfey	<i>The Comical History of Don Quixote, Part 1</i> (1694)	Mary Butler, duchess of Ormond
D'Urfey	<i>Don Quixote, Part II</i> (1694)	Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex
D'Urfey	<i>The Comical History of Don Quixote, Part III</i> (1696)	Charles Montague, Esquire
D'Urfey	<i>The Famous History and Fall of Massainello: or, A Fisherman a Prince</i>	Thomas Leigh, Lord Leigh

	(1700)	
D'Urfey	<i>A Fond Husband</i> (1677)	James Butler, duke of Ormond
D'Urfey	<i>A Fool's Preferment</i> (1688)	Charles Morpeth, Lord Morpeth
D'Urfey	<i>The Intrigues at Versailles</i> (1697)	Sir Charles Sedley the Elder, Baronet, and Sir Charles Sedley, his son.
D'Urfey	<i>Love for Money</i> (1691)	Charles Grenville, Viscount Lansdowne
D'Urfey	<i>Madam Fickle</i> (1677)	James Butler, duke of Ormond
D'Urfey	<i>The Marriage-Hater Matched</i> (1692)	James Butler, duke of Ormond
D'Urfey	<i>The Modern Prophets</i> (1709)	Sir William Scawen, Baronet.
D'Urfey	<i>Old Mode and the New</i> (1703)	Charles Lennox, duke of Richmond and Lennox
D'Urfey	<i>The Richmond Heiress</i> (1693)	Sir Nicholas Garrard, Baronet
D'Urfey	<i>Sir Barnaby Whigg</i> (1681)	George Berkeley, earl of Berkeley
D'Urfey	<i>The Siege of Memphis</i> (1676)	Henry Chevers, Esquire
D'Urfey	<i>Wonders in the Sun</i> (1706)	"To the Right Noble, Honourable and Ingenious Patrons of Poetry, Musick, &c. The Celebrated Society of the Kit-Cat-Club"
Ecclestone	<i>Noah's Flood</i> (1679)	Anna Scott, duchess of Monmouth and duchess of Buccleuch in her own right
Etherege	<i>The Comical Revenge</i>	Charles Sackville, Lord Buckhurst

	(1664)	
Etherege	<i>The Man of Mode</i> (1676)	Mary of Modena, duchess of York, consort of James Stuart
Flecknoe	<i>The Damoiselles a la Mode</i> (1667)	William and Margaret Cavendish, duke and duchess of Newcastle
Flecknoe	<i>Emilia</i> (1672)	Margaret Cavendish, duchess of Newcastle
Flecknoe	<i>Erminia</i> (1661)	Martha Southcott, Lady Southcott
Flecknoe	<i>Love's Kingdom</i> (1664)	William Cavendish, marquess of Newcastle
Harris	<i>The City Bride</i> (1696)	Sir John Walter, Baronet
Harris	<i>Love's a Lottery</i> (1699)	Juliana Boyle, countess of Burlington
Heidegger	<i>Antiochus</i> (1712)	Juliana Boyle, countess of Burlington
Heidegger	<i>Almahide</i> (1710)	Giovanni Wencislao Conte di Gallasso
Heidegger	<i>Arminius</i> (1714)	Henrietta Godolphin, countess of Godolphin
Heidegger	<i>Ernelinda</i> (1713)	Richard Lowther, Viscount Lonsdale, Baron Lowther
Hill	<i>Elfrid</i> (1710)	Henry Grey, marquess and earl of Kent
Hill	<i>Rinaldo</i> (1711)	Anne, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland
Hughes	<i>Calypso and Telemachus</i> (1712)	Anne Hamilton, duchess of Hamilton in her own right
J., G.	<i>The Widdow Ranter</i> (1690)	Madam Welldon
Johnson, Ch.	<i>The Force of Friendship</i> (1710)	Adelaide Roffeni Talbot, duchess of Shrewsbury
Johnson, Ch.	<i>The Generous Husband</i>	John Ashburnham, Lord Ashburnham

	(1711)	
Johnson, Ch.	<i>The Wife's Relief</i> (1712)	Henry Bentinck, earl of Portland
Killigrew	<i>Cecilia and Clorinda. Part One</i> (1664)	Anne Villiers, countess of Morton
Killigrew	<i>Cecilia and Clorinda. Part Two</i> (1664)	Dorothy Sidney, countess of Sunderland
Killigrew	<i>Claricilla</i> (1664)	Elizabeth Killigrew, Viscountess Shanon
Killigrew	<i>Bellamira her Dream. Part One</i> (1664)	Mary Villiers, duchess of Richmond and Lennox
Killigrew	<i>Bellamira her Dream. Part Two</i> (1664)	Anne Savile, countess of Sussex
Killigrew	<i>The Parson's Wedding</i> (1664)	Lady Ursula Bertie
Killigrew	<i>The Pilgrim</i> (1664)	Elizabeth Dormer, countess of Carnarvon
Killigrew	<i>The Princess</i> (1664)	Anne Lovelace, Baroness Wentworth
Killigrew	<i>Thomaso; or, The Wanderer, The First Part</i> (1663)	Prince Rupert of the Rhine ("Prince Palatine Polixander")
Lee	<i>Caesar Borgia</i> (1680)	Philip Sidney, earl of Pembroke and Montgomery
Lee	<i>Gloriana</i> (1676)	Louise de K�roualle, duchess of Portsmouth in her own right
Lee	<i>Lucius Junius Brutus</i> (1681)	Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex
Lee	<i>Milthridates, King of Pontus</i> (1678)	Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex
Lee	<i>Nero, Emperor of Rome</i> (1675)	John Wilmot, earl of Rochester

Lee	<i>The Princess of Cleve</i> (1689)	Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex
Lee	<i>The Rival Queens</i> (1677)	John Sheffield, earl of Mulgrave
Lee	<i>Sophonisba</i> (1676)	Louise de K�roualle, duchess of Portsmouth in her own right
Lee	<i>Theodosius</i> (1680)	Frances Teresa Stuart, duchess of Richmond and Lennox
Manley	<i>Almyna</i> (1707)	Elizabeth Montague, countess of Sandwich
Manley	<i>The Royal Mischief</i> (1696)	William Cavendish, duke of Devonshire
Medbourne	<i>St Cecily</i> (1666)	Queen Catherine of Braganza, queen consort of
Medbourne	<i>Tartuffe</i> (1670)	Henry Howard, Lord Howard of Norfolk
N., M.	<i>The Faithful General</i> (1706)	Mary Butler, duchess of Ormond
Neri	<i>Clotilda</i> (1709)	Jemima Grey, duchess of Kent
Otway	<i>Alcibiades</i> (1675)	Charles Sackville, earl of Middlesex
Otway	<i>The Atheist, or, The Second Part of The Soldier's Fortune</i> (1684)	William Savile, Lord Elland
Otway	<i>Don Carlos, Prince of Spain</i> (1676)	James Stuart, duke of York
Otway	<i>Friendship in Fashion</i> (1678)	Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex
Otway	<i>The History and Fall of Caius Marius</i> (1680)	Anthony Cary, Viscount Falkland
Otway	<i>The Orphan</i> (1680)	Mary of Modena, duchess of York, consort of

		James Stuart
Otway	<i>The Soldier's Fortune</i> (1681)	in her own right
Otway	<i>Titus and Berenice, with The Cheats of Scarpin</i> (1677)	John Wilmot, earl of Rochester
Otway	<i>Venice Preserv'd</i> (1682)	Louise de K�roualle, duchess of Portsmouth
Philips, A.	<i>The Distrest Mother</i> (1712)	Mary Montagu, duchess of Montagu
Philips, A.	<i>The Revengful Queen</i> (1698)	James Butler, duke of Ormond
Philips, K.	<i>Pompey</i> (1667)	Frances Wentworth, countess of Roscommon
Philips, K.	<i>Pompey</i> (1667)	Elizabeth Boyle, countess of Cork and countess of Burlington in her own right
Pix	<i>The Adventures in Madrid</i> (1709)	Sir Jacob Banks
Pix	<i>The Beau Defeated</i> (1700)	Henrietta Paulet, duchess of Bolton
Pix	<i>The False Friend</i> (1699)	Juliana Boyle, countess of Burlington
Pix	<i>Ibrahim</i> (1696)	Richard Minchall, Esquire
Pix	<i>The Deceiver Deceived</i> (1698)	Sir Robert Marsham, Knight and Baronet
Pix	<i>The Different Widows</i> (1703)	Frances Cecil, countess of Salisbury

Pix	<i>The Double Distress</i> (1701)	John Berkeley, Viscount Fitzhardinge
Pix	<i>Queen Catharine</i> (1698)	Mrs. Cook of Norfolk
Pix	<i>The Spanish Wives</i> (1696)	Colonel Thomas Tipping, of Whitfield
Playford	<i>The Tragedy of King Saul</i> (1703)	Juliana Boyle, countess of Burlington
Pordage	<i>The Siege of Babylon</i> (1678)	Mary of Modena, duchess of York, consort of James Stuart
Powell	<i>Alphonso, King of Naples</i> (1691)	Mary Butler, duchess of Ormond
Powell (?)	<i>Bonduca; or The British Heroine</i> (1696)	John Jeffreys, Baron of Wem
Powell	<i>Brutus of Alba</i> (1697)	Samuel Briscoe
Powell	<i>The Treacherous Brothers</i> (1690)	“To the Patentees, and Sharers of their Majesties Theatre”
Powell	<i>A Very Good Wife</i> (1693)	Alexander Popham, Esquire
de La Roche-Guilhen	<i>Rare en tout</i> (1677)	Isabella Fitzroy, duchess of Grafton, consort of Henry FitzRoy
Rowe	<i>The Ambitious Step-Mother</i> (1701)	Edward Villiers, earl of Jersey
Rowe	<i>The Fair Penitent</i> (1703)	Mary Butler, duchess of Ormond
Rowe	<i>Jane Shore</i> (1714)	Charles Douglas, duke of Queensberry and Dover
Rowe	<i>The Royal Convert</i> (1708)	Charles Montagu, Lord Halifax



Rowe	<i>Tamerlane</i> (1702)	William Cavendish, marquess of Hartington
Rowe	<i>Ulysses</i> (1706)	Sidney Godolphin, Lord Godolphin
Sedley	<i>The Mulberry-Garden</i> (1668)	Frances Teresa Stuart, duchess of Richmond
Settle	<i>The Ambitious Slave</i> (1694)	John Bright, Esquire
Settle	<i>Cambyses</i> (1671)	Anna Scott, duchess of Monmouth and duchess of Buccleuch in her own right
Settle	<i>The City-Ramble</i> (1711)	Henry Hare, Baron of Colerane
Settle	<i>The Conquest of China by the Tartars</i> (1676)	Lord Castle-Rising
Settle	<i>Distress'd Innocence</i> (1691)	John Lord Cutts, Baron of Gowran
Settle	<i>The Empress of Morocco</i> (1673)	Henry Howard, earl of Norwich
Settle	<i>Fatal Love</i> (1680)	Sir Robert Owen
Settle	<i>The Female Prelate</i> (1680)	Anthony Ashley Cooper, earl of Shaftesbury
Settle	<i>The Heir of Morocco</i> (1682)	Henrietta Wentworth, Baroness Wentworth of Nettlestead in her own right
Settle	<i>Herod and Mariamne</i> (1673)	Elizabeth Monck, duchess of Albemarle
Settle	<i>Ibrahim</i> (1677)	Elizabeth Monck, duchess of Albemarle
Settle	<i>Love and Revenge</i> (1675)	William Cavendish, duke of Newcastle
Settle	<i>Pastor Fido</i> (1677)	Elizabeth Delaval, daughter to the earl of

		Newburgh
Settle	<i>Philaster</i> (1695)	Meinhardt Schomberg, duke of Schonberg and Lemster
Settle	<i>The Virgin Prophetess</i> (1701)	Sir Charles Duncomb, Knight
Settle	<i>The World in the Moon</i> (1697)	Christopher Rich, Esquire
Shadwell, A.	<i>The Volunteers</i> (1693)	Mary II, Queen of England, Scotland and Ireland)
Shadwell	<i>The Amorous Bigotte with The Second Part of Tegue O Dively</i> (1690)	Charles Talbot, earl of Shrewsbury
Shadwell	<i>Bury-Fair</i> (1689)	Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex
Shadwell	<i>Epsom Wells</i> (1673)	William Cavendish, duke of Newcastle
Shadwell	<i>The Humorists</i> (1671)	Margaret Cavendish, duchess of Newcastle
Shadwell	<i>The Libertine</i> (1676)	William Cavendish, duke of Newcastle
Shadwell	<i>The Miser</i> (1672)	Charles Sackville, Lord Buckhurst
Shadwell	<i>The Squire of Alsatia</i> (1688)	Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex
Shadwell	<i>The Sullen Lovers</i> (1668)	William Cavendish, duke of Newcastle
Shadwell	<i>Timon of Athens</i> (1678)	George Villiers, duke of Buckingham
Shadwell	<i>A True Widow</i> (1679)	Sir Charles Sedley, Baronet
Shadwell	<i>The Virtuoso</i> (1676)	William Cavendish, duke of Newcastle
Shadwell	<i>The Woman Captain</i> (1680)	Henry Cavendish, Lord Ogle
Stapylton	<i>The Slighted Maid</i> (1663)	James, Scott, duke of Monmouth and Orkney

Stapylton	<i>The Tragedie of Hero and Leander</i> (1669)	Anna Scott, duchess of Monmouth and duchess of Buccleuch in her own right
Steele	<i>The Funeral</i> (1702)	Geertruid Johanna van Keppel, countess of Albemarle
Steele	<i>The Lying Lover</i> (1703)	James Butler, duke of Ormond
Steele	<i>The Tender Husband</i> (1705)	Joseph Addison
Swiny	<i>Camilla</i> (1706)	Lucy Wharton, countess of Wharton and Viscountess Winchendon
Thompson (?)	<i>The English Rogue</i> (1668)	Mrs. Alice Barret
Trapp	<i>Abra-Mule</i> (1704)	Henrietta Godolphin, countess of Godolphin
Trotter	<i>Agnes de Castro</i> (1696)	Charles Sackville, earl of Dorset and Middlesex
Trotter	<i>Fatal Friendship</i> (1698)	Anne Stuart, Princess Royal and later Queen of Great Britain and Ireland
Trotter	<i>Love at a Loss</i> (1701)	Sarah Piers
Trotter	<i>The Revolution of Sweden</i> (1706)	Henrietta Godolphin, countess of Godolphin
Trotter	<i>The Unhappy Penitent</i> (1701)	Charles Montagu, Lord Halifax
Tuke	<i>The Souls Warfare</i> (1672)	Mary Rich, countess of Warwick
Wharton	<i>Love's Martyr</i> (c. 1685)	Mary Howe
Wycherley	<i>Love in a Wood</i> (1672)	Barbara Palmer, duchess of Cleveland in her own right
Wycherley	<i>The Plain-Dealer</i> (1677)	Mother Bennet

